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THE
COMPLETE WORKS
OF
ROBERT BURNS



Robert Burns.

THE
COMPLETE WORKS
OF
ROBERT BURNS
(SELF-INTERPRETING)

ILLUSTRATED WITH SIXTY ETCHINGS
AND WOOD CUTS, MAPS AND FACSIMILES

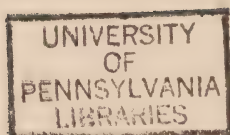


VOLUME I
PART I

PHILADELPHIA
THE GEBBIE PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED
1898

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

In May, 1787, the celebrated Dr. Moore, the author of "Zeluco," in writing to Burns, says, "You ought to deal more sparingly for the future, in the provincial dialect. Why should you by using that, limit the number of your admirers to those who understand the Scottish, when you could extend it to all persons of taste, who understand the English language."

A few years later, the poet Cowper, writing from England to a friend in Scotland said, "Burns loses much of his deserved praise in this country, through our ignorance of his language. I despair of meeting any Englishman who will take the pains that I have taken to understand him. His candle is light, but shut up in a dark lantern. I lent him to a sensible neighbor of mine, but the uncouth dialect spoiled all, and before he had read him through he was quite 'ramfeezled.'"

Lord Jeffrey, Edinburgh, writes to Mr. Empson, London, Nov. 11th, 1837: "In the last week I have read all Burns's life and works, not without many tears for the life especially. * * * You Southern Saxons cannot value him rightly. You miss half the pathos, and more than half his sweetness."

It has been a matter of regret to all English readers that Burns's "Scottish dialect" is so hard to understand. *To remedy this is the chief purpose of* THE SELF-INTERPRETING EDITION OF THE COMPLETE WORKS OF ROBERT BURNS.

The special qualifications for this work of interpretation are referred to in our Editors' preface. Mr. Hunter, we may say *en passant*, was selected by us as consulting Scotch editor, from our knowledge of his general scholarly ability, his long experience as the chief editor of the revised Ogilvie's Imperial Dictionary, as editor of the supplement to Worcester's Dictionary, and more especially because of his enthusiastic love for Burns, his thorough knowledge of his author, and last though not least, because the place of his nativity—Ayrshire, (like that of Mr. Gebbie, co-editor and publisher)—made him *au fait* in the language, manners and customs of the "land of Burns."

The advantage of a dual editorship, in which both the members are "native and to the manner born," has been manifested at every step in the progress of the work, alike in compilation, interpretation, and elucidation generally. It is for the public to judge the result.

We desire to say only one word as to the embellishment and general make-up of our Self-Interpreting edition of The Scottish Bard. The type was specially cast for this edition by The MacKellar Smiths & Jordan Co., of Philadelphia. The Illustrations (over one hundred in all) have for nearly two years engaged the best etchers and engravers in America and some in Europe. The Maps, Facsimiles of MSS., &c., which are reproduced, will be interesting, being mostly copied from original MS. now in American collections. In this connection we wish to record our thanks to Messrs. Geo. W. Childs, Ferdinand J. Dreer, and Raymond Claghorn, of Philadelphia, and Robert Clarke, of Cincinnati, for placing at our disposal their original MSS. of Burns.

When we have deemed it desirable, we have reproduced the music for the best songs, and in the George Thompson Correspondence we give the original music in full.

In conclusion, we have made it our study to combine in this edition of Burns every feature of excellence that has hitherto been developed in connection with his name and fame, and have aimed to make it in all respects such an edition as the truest lover of Burns can take to his home and say, "Now I have an edition of Burns worthy the Poet."

THE GEBBIE PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED.

EDITORS' PREFACE.

In offering to the public another edition of the Works of Burns, it appears reasonable that we should state the reasons that led us to undertake the task of preparing it, and the special claims that we believe it to have on public attention. First, then, we say that up to this time the mere English-speaking reader has had no edition of Burns at his disposal enabling him adequately to understand and appreciate this, the greatest of Scottish poets. Burns's poems are, as he himself phrases it, in the title-page to his Kilmarnock Edition, "chiefly in the Scottish dialect"—a dialect largely "an unknown tongue" to most Americans and Englishmen—and this applies especially to his best and most characteristic pieces. Many editions of the Works of Burns have been published, some with and some without glossaries, and some with foot-notes at the bottom of the page, giving (or professing to give) the English equivalents of a small proportion of the Scottish words, but not one of those editions satisfies in any adequate degree, the requirements of the English reader. For the first time the English-speaking public is put in a position to understand Burns readily, to enjoy his caustic wit, his genial humor, his wondrous power of fancy, and to appreciate his unrivalled richness of diction and felicity of expression. Up to this time the American public have had to receive Burns largely on trust, or to form their estimate of him from the pieces they could understand. He is now made plain in all his fulness and power.

Besides the feature of interpretation, on which we largely rely for the favor of the American public in this enterprise, we desire to point out, somewhat in detail, the immense superiority in respect of completeness that the present edition possesses over all other editions of our author. The fact is unique that it has taken nearly a hundred years to gather from their hiding-places more than one-half the letters of Burns, and more than one-third of his poems and songs. There are various causes to account for this singular fact.

Chief amongst them was his early death. Burns died in his thirty-seventh year. He had not only been a prolific poet, but a very active correspondent; but he was very unsystematic. It has been urged by his early biographers, Currie, Cromek, Lockhart and Cunningham, especially, that Burns never expected that his correspondence would be published. This may be correct up to a certain period, but we are enabled to publish (for the first time) a letter which he wrote to Mr. Peter Hill, book-seller and publisher, Edinburgh (introducing Mr. Findlater),* in which he states that he was collecting (and evidently preparing for publication) some, at least, of his letters. This was in 1794. Shortly after this (in 1796) Burns died, and then it was determined to publish his works, letters and poetry, for the benefit of his family. The editorship was nobly and unselfishly undertaken by Dr. Currie, and the work carefully and successfully accomplished. This was in 1800; but Currie was trammelled by three or four draw-backs: *First*, some of the pieces to which he had access were considered too free in various ways. *Second*, Burns was full half a century ahead of his time in his ideas on Liberty; and radicalism, after the commencement of the French revolution, had become unpopular in Europe, therefore, all letters, songs and poems likely to be offensive to a conservative government were suppressed. This feature will be best understood by reading "The Lincluden Vision and Song of Liberty," now, for the first time, published as a connected poem. *Third*, the satires and epigrams affecting people then living were also suppressed. *Fourth*, the especial reason why Dr. Currie did not have more matter to select from or record, was:—the fame of Burns at the commencement of this century was not so assured as it afterwards became. To quote the words of one of his most intelligent eulogists:—"It took Scotland fully fifty years to arrive at a full appreciation of what a gigantic genius she had held in her bosom." Gradually, however, as his fame increased, people with whom he had corresponded began to look up his letters; some retained them as precious relics, and some sold them. Then the publishers got them for publication, until when Allan Cunningham, in 1834, published his edition of the poet, he was able to boast that in his "Complete Works of Burns" he had given to the world 150 songs and poems more than Currie had given, and more than 100 more letters.

The edition of Cunningham (Virtue & Co.) and Blackie's

* This letter is now in the collection of Mr. Ferdinand J. Dreer, of Philadelphia, who kindly lent it to us for publication.

have been the editions most extensively sold in America, and Americans generally have accepted them as complete. Blackie's was published in 1846, and was a trifle more complete than Cunningham's. Since the publication of Virtue's and Blackie's editions, there have appeared Chambers', Waddell's, Smith's, Gilfillan's and Wm. Scott Douglas's. The public will understand the necessity for a new edition of Burns's works when we inform them that ours will contain at least 100 pieces in verse and nearly 200 more letters than either Virtue's or Blackie's. Besides this, we have restored to their full text many of the poems and letters abridged by previous editors. The notes of all previous editors we have treated on the freest eclectic principle; using only those, however, that are needful for a clearer understanding of the text and the story of the Poet's life.

While we have, therefore, laid all the previous editions of Burns under contribution, comparing, weighing and adopting for ours what we thought best in each, we have selected for the basis of this edition, that of Wm. Scott Douglas, of Edinburgh. Mr. Douglas has undoubtedly, on the principle of using the work of *his* predecessors, produced the most complete and satisfactory edition of the works of the Bard of Scotland, published till 1880. We have not hesitated, however, to deal freely with his work, collating it constantly with that of other editors, Cunningham, Hogg and Motherwell, Chambers, Gilfillan, Waddell and others, adopting it where we considered it best, but correcting, amplifying, condensing, deleting or otherwise modifying it as the weight of authority or our own judgment and knowledge dictated. The result is, that this is really an ECLECTIC EDITION, comprising the best of all former editions of the works of Burns, to which we add our own commentaries and translations. Our notes and explanations are generally signed with the editor's initials, and the same mode is followed in reference to any original matter added to Mr. Douglas's notes. Where additional matter has been adopted from other editors, credit is given them; in the case of mere incidental hints or suggestions we have not been so careful to indicate authorship. Where Mr. Douglas's notes have been modified by re-writing a portion for the sake of clearness, condensation, or correction, or by incorporating new matter in the text with the view of enriching and elucidating it, we have not, so long as the main portion of the work is Mr. D.'s, indicated our share.

We publish, for the first time, enough of the celebrated and mysterious "Court of Equity" to enable our readers clearly to

understand the nature of this production, so frequently referred to in his correspondence.

Our discovery of the connection of "The Lincluden Vision" and "The Ode to Liberty" will be found fully detailed in Vol. V. The long missing Edinburgh Journal will be found complete in Vol. II.

One new special feature in this edition, (besides our method of translation) is, that each volume is complete in itself, covering a certain period of the poet's life, and comprising both his rhymed and unrhymed productions, the poetry keeping time with the prose and the prose with the poetry; while the intercalated biography aids in illustrating both and in turn receives illustration from them. The only exceptions to this arrangement are in the cases of his Autobiography, his Clarinda Correspondence and his Correspondence with George Thomson; and, in each of these cases the intelligent reader will easily appreciate the reason for the distinction. By treating the work in this way the life-history of the Poet helps to elucidate his productions.

In our choice of a Biography for the poet, we have had no hesitation in selecting that of Alexander Smith, the author of "City Poems," "A Life Drama," etc., a poet and an Ayrshire man by birth, as being at once the clearest, fullest, most genially sympathetic, and generally interesting. The same freedom of treatment has been applied to it that has been applied to Mr. Douglas's notes; facts have been verified, opinions and judgments weighed, and every means used to give the public at once, the fullest and fairest biography of Robert Burns. Free use has been made in this connection of the eloquent sketch of his life by Dr. Waddell, and the careful Biography by Robert Chambers. Nor have the Biographies by his brother poets, Cunningham, and Hogg and Motherwell been neglected.

GEO. GEBBIE.

PREFACE.

(*To the Original Edition, Kilmarnock, 1786.*)

THE following trifles are not the production of the Poet, who, with all the advantages of learned art, and perhaps amid the elegancies and idlenesses of upper life, looks down for a rural theme, with an eye to Theocrites or Virgil. To the Author of this, these and other celebrated names (their countrymen) are, in their original languages, 'a fountain shut up, and a book sealed.' Unacquainted with the necessary requisites for commencing Poet by rule, he sings the sentiments and manners he felt and saw in himself and his rustic compeers around him, in his and their native language. Though a Rhymer from his earliest years, at least from the earliest impulses of the softer passions, it was not till very lately that the applause, perhaps the partiality, of Friendship, awakened his vanity so far as to make him think anything of his was worth showing; and none of the following works were ever composed with a view to the press. To amuse himself with the little creations of his own fancy, amid the toil and fatigues of a laborious life; to transcribe the various feelings, the loves, the griefs, the hopes, the fears, in his own breast; to find some kind of counterpoise to the struggles of a world, always an alien scene, a task uncouth to the poetical mind; these were his motives for courting the Muses, and in these he found Poetry to be its own reward.

Now that he appears in the public character of an Author, he does it with fear and trembling. So dear is fame to the rhyming tribe, that even he, an obscure, nameless Bard, shrinks aghast at the thought of being branded as 'An impertinent blockhead, obtruding his nonsense on the world; and because he can make a shift to jingle a few doggerel Scotch rhymes together, looks upon himself as a Poet of no small consequence forsooth.'

It is an observation of that celebrated Poet*—whose divine Elegies do honor to our language, our nation and our species,

* Shenstone.

—that ‘Humility has depressed many a genius to a hermit, but never raised one to fame.’ If any Critic catches at the word *genius*, the Author tells him, once for all, that he certainly looks upon himself as possess of some poetic abilities, otherwise his publishing in the manner he has done would be a manœuvre below the worst character which, he hopes his worst enemy will ever give him: but to the genius of a Ramsay, or the glorious dawns of the poor unfortunate Ferguson, he, with equal unaffected sincerity, declares, that, even in his highest pulse of vanity, he has not the most distant pretensions. These two justly admired Scotch Poets he has often had in his eye in the following pieces; but rather with a view to kindle at their flame, than for servile imitation.

To his Subscribers, the Author returns his most sincere thanks. Not the mercenary bow over a counter, but the heart-throbbing gratitude of the Bard, conscious how much he is indebted to Benevolence and Friendship for gratifying him, if he deserves it, in that dearest wish of every poetic bosom—to be distinguished. He begs his readers, particularly the Learned and the Polite, who may honor him with a perusal, that they will make every allowance for Education and Circumstances of Life: but if, after a fair, candid, and impartial criticism, he shall stand convicted of Dulness and Nonsense, let him be done by, as he would in that case do by others—let him be condemned, without mercy, to contempt and oblivion.

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WOOD CUT.

Burns's Crest (On Title Page).

EXPLANATION.

At the head of each Poem, Song, or Letter, will be recorded, where and when it was first *published*.

The Scotch words are printed in *Italics*, and their English meaning, in small type, appears at the end of each line.

The Chronological Notes of the Douglas Edition, as explained in the Editor's Preface, being here mainly used, are not signed; all the other notes are recorded by signature, or credited to their various editors.

The date of the compositions, and the age of the Poet at the period, appear at the head of each alternate page.

POEMS AND SONGS.

SONG—HANDSOME NELL.

Tune—"I am a man unmarried."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

I never had the least thought or inclination of turning Poet till I got once heartily in love, and then *rhyme* and *song* were, in a manner, the spontaneous language of my heart. The following composition was the first of my performances. It is, indeed, very puerile and silly; but I am always pleased with it, as it recalls to my mind those happy days when my heart was yet honest, and my tongue was sincere.—*Common-place Book*, August, 1783.

O ONCE I lov'd a bonie lass,
Aye, and I love her still ;
And whilst that virtue warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.

As bonie lasses I hae seen,
And mony full as *braw* ;
But, for a modest gracefu' mien,
The like I never saw.

gaily dressed

A bonie lass, I will confess,
Is pleasant to the *e'e* ;
But, without some better qualities,
She's no a lass for me.

eye

But Nelly's looks are *blythe* and sweet, cheerful
 And what is best of *a'*, all
 Her reputation is complete,
 And fair without a flaw.

She dresses ay sae clean and neat,
 Both decent and genteel;
 And then there's something in her gait
 Gars ony dress look *weel*. makes well

A gaudy dress and *gentle* air well-born
 May slightly touch the heart;
 But it's innocence and modesty
 That polishes the dart.

'Tis this in Nelly pleases me,
 'Tis this enchants my soul;
 For absolutely in my breast
 She reigns without controul.

[Dr. Currie transcribed this song very accurately from the poet's Common-place Book, where it stands recorded under date April, 1783. Burns delighted to refer to the incident that gave rise to these juvenile verses:—Nelly Kirkpatrick, daughter of a blacksmith in the neighborhood of Mount Oliphant, inspired the song in the harvest-field, in the autumn of 1773, when he was yet under fifteen, or as some say seventeen, years old. We must refer the reader to the bard's own account of this his first love-experience, contained in the poem addressed to Mrs. Scott of Wauchope House, and also in his autobiography; meanwhile let us note how early the power of music seems to have affected Burns. Speaking of "Nell," he says: "Among other love-inspiring qualities, she sang sweetly; and it was her favourite reel to which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme." In his Common-place Book, he has followed the record of it with an elaborate "criticism," which shews how carefully he had been training himself for lyric composition. Here is a sample:—In the second couplet of verse *first* "the expression is a little awkward, and the sentiment too serious." "Stanza the *second* I am well pleased with . . . and I think it conveys a fine idea of a sweet, sonsy lass."* He

* "Sonsy lass," a plump, well-conditioned lass. "Sonsiness" implies good-nature.
 —J. H.

condemns verses *third* and *fourth*; but "the thoughts in the *fifth* stanza come finely up to my favorite idea—a sweet, sonsy lass." He approves also of the *sixth* verse, "but the second and fourth lines *ending with short syllables, hurts the whole.*" "The *seventh* stanza has several minute faults; but I remember I composed it in a wild enthusiasm of passion, and to this hour I never recollect it, but my heart melts, and my blood sallies at the remembrance." In 1786, Burns presented copies of some of his early pieces—and this among the rest—to Mrs. Stewart of Stair, and in that MS. the fourth verse is remodelled thus :—

But Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet,
Good-humoured, frank, and free;
And still the more I view them o'er,
The more they captive me.

Verse *fifth* is wanting in the Stair MS. That the poet was not satisfied with these variations is evident from the fact that he afterwards transmitted the song to Johnson for publication in its original form.]

HAR' STE—A FRAGMENT.

harvest

Tune—"I had a horse, and I had nae mair."

(ORIGINAL, COMMON-PLACE BOOK, 1872.)

Another circumstance of my life, which made very considerable alteration on my mind and manners, was, that I spent my seventeenth * summer a good distance from home, at a noted school on a smuggling coast, to learn mensuration, surveying, dialling, &c. . . . I went on with a high hand in my geometry, till the sun entered *Virgo*, a month which is always a carnival in my bosom; a charming *fillette*, who lived next door to the school, overset my trigonometry, &c. . . . The last two nights of my stay in the country, had sleep been a mortal sin, I was innocent. . . .

Song *second* was the ebullition of that passion which ended the fore-mentioned school business.—*Autobiography*.

Now breezy *win's* and slaughtering guns
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather,

winds

* Dr. Currie and succeeding editors of Burns have printed this word "nineteenth;" the above extract is made from the original MS. (Dr. Currie made the correction, after due deliberation, on the authority of Gilbert Burns, who affirmed that here and elsewhere the poet had understated his age by two years.—J. H.)

And the muircock springs on whirring wings
Amang the blooming heather.

Now waving crops, with yellow tops,
Delight the weary farmer,
An' the moon shines bright when I rove at night,
To muse *

[The school was that of Kirkoswald, and the name of this "charming *fillette*" was Peggy Thomson. Shortly prior to the first publication of our author's poems she became the wife of a Mr. Neilson at Kirkoswald—an "old acquaintance" of Burns, "and a most worthy fellow." When we come to give the song in its finished form (under date 1783), about which time, it seems, Burns experienced a renewed fit of passion for Peggy, we shall give some particulars regarding her history. See page 50.

Here we see that from the very beginning of the poet's attempts at song-writing, he must have a tune to prompt his musings. He early laid down this rule, that "to *sowth* whistle }
softly } the tune over and over, is the readiest way to catch the inspiration and raise the bard into that glorious enthusiasm so strongly characteristic of old Scotch poetry."]

SONG—O *TIBBIE*, I HAE SEEN THE DAY.

Isabella

Tune—"Invercauld's Reel, or Strathspey."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788. COMPARED WITH C.-P. BOOK, 1872.)

Chor.—O Tibbie, I hae seen the day,
Ye *wadna* been sae shy; would not
For *laik* o' *gear* ye *lightly* me, *lack* cash slight
But, trowth, I *care na by*. don't care

Yestreen I met you on the moor, yester-eve
Ye spak na, but gaed by like stoure;†

* In the extended version, printed p. 50 this line reads "To muse upon my charmer," but in the Common-place Book, after "To muse," a name, supposed to be Jean Armour, is written in cypher, or short-hand. If this supposition is correct, it only shews what "charmer" was uppermost in the poet's mind when he made the entry in August, 1785.

† You spoke not, but went past like dust driven by the wind.

Ye *geck* at me because I'm poor, toss your head
 But *fient* a hair care I. deuce
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

When comin hame on Sunday last,
 Upon the road as I cam past,
 Ye snufft an *gae* your head a cast— gave
 But *trouth* I care't na by. in truth
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

I doubt na, lass, but ye may think,
 Because ye hae the name o' *clink*, cash
 That ye can please me at a wink,
 Whene'er ye like to try.
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

But sorrow tak him that's sae mean,
 Altho' his *pouch* o' coin were clean, pocket
 Wha follows ony saucy *quean*, wench
 That looks sae proud and high.
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

Altho' a lad were e'er sae smart,
 If that he want the *yellow dirt*, gold
 Ye'll cast your head anither *airt*, direction
 And answer him fu' dry.
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

But if he hae the name o' *gear*, money
 Ye'll fasten to him like a brier,
 Tho' hardly he, for sense or *lear*, learning
 Be better than the *kye*. kine
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

But, Tibbie, lass, tak my advice:
 Your daddie's *gear* maks you sae nice;

The deil a ane *wad spier* your price, would ask
 Were ye as poor as I.
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

There lives a lass beside yon park,
 I'd rather *hae* her in her *sark*, have chemise
 Than you wi' a' your thousand mark;*
 That *gars* you look sae high. makes
 O Tibbie, I hae seen the day, &c.

[A little controversy has arisen regarding the date of this song. In the poet's Glenriddell notes, he expressly says of it:—"This song I composed about the age of seventeen." Mrs. Begg, on the other hand (who, by the way, was only five years old when her brother was seventeen), insisted that the Tibbie of the song was Isabella Stein, of Tarbolton Parish. In a note to the present writer, she says:—"Tibbie Stein lived at Little Hill, a farm marching with that of Lochlea: that the song was written upon her was well known in the neighborhood, no one doubting it."

With all deference, we are inclined to adhere to the poet's direct statement, and regard this as a Mount Oliphant incident, following immediately after the summer he spent at Kirkoswald. We feel greatly strengthened in this opinion by a corresponding record of Burns, the correctness of which has also been much controverted by his brothers and sisters. It is this:—"In my seventeenth year (*i. e.*, 1775, two years before the Lochlea period), to give my manners a brush, I went to a country dancing-school. My father had an unaccountable antipathy against these meetings; and my going was, what to this hour I repent, in absolute defiance of his commands."†

The second stanza and the closing one are both wanting in Johnson's *Museum*. They are inserted here from the *Common-place Book*. Dr. Currie's version of the concluding stanza reads thus:—

There lives a lass in yonder park,
 I wadna gie her in her sark
 For thee, wi' a' thy thousan' mark;
 Ye needna look sae high.]

* The mark was a Scottish coin worth 13s. 4d. Scots, or 1s. 1½d. sterling, or 26½ cents.

† There is some question regarding the chronology here, and most commentators place the school at Tarbolton.—J. H.

SONG—I DREAM'D I LAY.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

These two stanzas I composed when I was seventeen, and are among the oldest of my printed pieces.—*Glenriddell Notes in Cromek.*

I DREAM'D I lay where flowers were springing
 Gaily in the sunny beam;
 List'ning to the wild birds singing,
 By a falling crystal stream:
 Straight the sky grew black and daring;
 Thro' the woods the whirlwinds rave;
 Trees with aged arms were warring,
 O'er the swelling *drumlie* wave. muddy

Such was my life's deceitful morning,
 Such the pleasures I enjoy'd:
 But lang *or* noon, loud tempests storming, ere
 A' my flowery bliss destroy'd. all
 Tho' fickle fortune has deceiv'd me—
 She promis'd fair, and perform'd but ill,
 Of *mony* a joy and hope bereav'd me— many
 I bear a heart shall support me still.

[There can be no doubt that this production was suggested to the young lyrist by his admiration of Mrs. Cockburn's song, "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," which, about the year 1764, found its way into miscellaneous collections of song. It appeared in one of these published in that year, called *The Black-bird*; and also in a like miscellany entitled *The Charmer*, and in another named *The Lark* (both of the latter dated 1765). Any one of them may have been that "Select Collection" which, he tells us, was his *vade mecum* before the Burness family removed from Mount Oliphant.

The poet again and again reverts to the last four lines of this song, as if the conning them over yielded him some comfort. "At the close of that dreadful period"—his distress at Irvine—he

adopted these lines as the opening of a little "sang to soothe his misery," only altering line third to suit his altered circumstances, thus:

Of mistress, friends and wealth bereaved me.

But the embryo minstrel, in composing the present song, had Mrs. Cockburn's *Flowers of the Forest* rather too much in his eye; for he not only copied her ideas, but her very expressions. For *her* "silver streams shining in the sunny beams," we have here the tyro's "crystal stream" falling "gaily in the sunny beam." The river Tweed of Mrs. Cockburn "grows *drumly* and dark," and so does the streamlet of the young dreamer become a "swelling *drumlie* wave." The lady hears "loud tempests storming before the mid-day," and so does the boy Burns hear "lang or noon, loud tempests storming." Finally, the authoress is "perplexed" with the "sporting of fickle fortune," and our poet is wretchedly "deceived" by the ill-performed promises of the same "fickle fortune;" and, not to be outdone by the lady's defiance of fortune's frowns, the independent youngster boasts that he "bears a heart shall support him still." Robert Chambers refers to these similitudes in his last remarks on this song.]

SONG—IN THE CHARACTER OF A RUINED FARMER.

Tune—"Go from my window, Love, do."

(CHAMBERS, 1852, COMPARED WITH THE ORIG. MS.)

THE sun he is sunk in the west,
All creatures retirèd to rest,
While here I sit, all sore beset,
With sorrow, grief, and woe:
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O!

The prosperous man is asleep,
Nor hears how the whirlwinds sweep;
But Misery and I must watch
The surly tempest blow;
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O!

There lies the dear partner of my breast;
Her cares for a moment at rest:
Must I see thee, my youthful pride,
 Thus brought so very low!
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O!

There lie my sweet babies in her arms;
No anxious fear their little hearts alarms;
But for their sake my heart does ache,
 With many a bitter throe:
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O!

I once was by Fortune carest:
I once could relieve the distrest:
Now life's poor support, hardly earn'd,
 My fate will scarce bestow:
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O!

No comfort, no comfort I have!
How welcome to me were the grave!
But then my wife and children dear—
 O, whither would they go!
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O!

O whither, O whither shall I turn!
All friendless, forsaken, forlorn!
For, in this world, Rest or Peace
 I never more shall know!
And it's O, fickle Fortune, O!

[The original of this early production is in the possession of William Nelson, Esq., Edinburgh. It is a stray leaf from a collection formerly known as the Stair MS., now dissevered and scattered abroad. The "ruined farmer" here is undoubtedly meant as a presentment of the author's father bravely struggling to weather out his hard fate at Mount Oliphant. As a pathetic

dirge, it is the best illustration of the following passage in the poet's autobiography :—

"The farm proved a ruinous bargain. . . . My father was advanced in life when he married. I was the eldest of seven children, and he, worn out by early hardship, was unfit for labour. My father's spirit was soon irritated, but not easily broken. There was a freedom in his lease in two years more ; and to weather these two years we retrenched expenses," &c.]

TRAGIC FRAGMENT.

(FROM THE POET'S MS. IN THE MONUMENT AT EDINBURGH,
WITH HEADING FROM CROMEK, 1808.)

In my early years, nothing less would serve me than courting the Tragic Muse. I was, I think, about eighteen or nineteen when I sketched the outlines of a tragedy forsooth ; but the bursting of a cloud of family misfortunes, which had for some time threatened us, prevented my farther progress. In those days I never wrote down anything ; so, except a speech or two, the whole has escaped my memory. The following, which I most distinctly remember, was an exclamation from a great character—great in occasional instances of generosity, and daring at times in villanies. He is supposed to meet with a child of misery, and exclaims to himself—

ALL villain as I am—a damnéd wretch,
A hardened, stubborn, unrepenting sinner,
Still my heart melts at human wretchedness;
And with sincere but unavailing sighs
I view the helpless children of distress:
With tears indignant I behold the oppressor
Rejoicing in the honest man's destruction,
Whose unsubmitting heart was all his crime.—
Ev'n you, ye hapless crew! I pity you;
Ye, whom the seeming good think sin to pity;
Ye poor, despised, abandoned vagabonds,
Whom Vice, as usual, has turn'd o'er to ruin.

Oh! but for friends and interposing Heaven,
 I had been driven forth like you forlorn,
 The most detested, worthless wretch among you!
 O injured God! Thy goodness has endow'd me
 With talents passing most of my compeers,
 Which I in just proportion have abused—
 As far surpassing other common villains
 As Thou in natural parts has given me more.

[Notwithstanding the author's own authority for classing the foregoing with his very earliest efforts in poetical composition, it seems to have undergone revision and amendment at a later period. The copy we print from is perhaps a stray leaf of the Common-place Book, or manuscript collection of his early pieces, referred to by Alexander Smith as having been presented by Burns to Mrs. Dunlop. It varies somewhat from the copy inserted in the original Common-place Book now at Greenock. The version we adopt has the following heading—

A Fragment in the Hour of Remorse, on Seeing a Fellow-Creature in
 Misery, whom I had once known in Better Days.

The "human wretchedness" deplored in this pathetic soliloquy was that of the suffering household at Mount Oliphant, which the poet has so touchingly recorded in his autobiography. We have in these lines a glance at the tyrant factor, and his "insolent, threatening epistles, which used to set us all in tears,"—

With tears indignant I behold the oppressor
 Rejoicing in the honest man's destruction,
 Whose unsubmitting heart was all his crime,

in which last line we discern the "stubborn, ungainly integrity" of the poet's noble father. The speaker's sympathy for "poor, despised, abandoned vagabonds," corresponds in spirit with that passage in the Common-place Book, of date March, 1784, where he introduces this Fragment. Cromek, in 1808, first published the piece; but his copy wants the five closing lines, which accordingly we infer were added by the poet in 1784. Cromek's version was printed from a copy found among the poet's papers, headed with the introductory narrative prefixed to the text. It is curious to find Burns thus early attempting dramatic composition; but it is certain that William Burness had a few of Shakespeare's plays among the books on his shelf at Mount Oliphant.]

THE TARBOLTON LASSES.

(CHAMBERS, 1851.)

If ye *gae* up to yon *hill-tap*, go hill-top
 Ye'll there see bonie Peggy;
 She *kens* her father is a *laird*, knows land-owner
 And she forsooth's a *leddy*. lady

There Sophy tight, a lassie bright,
 Besides a handsome fortune:
Wha canna win her in a night, who cannot
 Has little art in courtin.

Gae down by Faile,* and taste the ale,
 And tak a look o' *Mysie*; Maria
 She's *dour* and *din*, a deil within, sullen sallow
 But *aiblins* she may please ye. haply

If she be shy, her sister try,
 Ye'll *may be* fancy Jenny; perhaps
 If ye'll dispense wi' want o' sense—
 She *kens* hersel she's bonie. knows

As ye gae up by yon hillside,
 Speer in for bonie Bessy; call and inquire
 She'll gie ye a *beck*, and bid ye light, curtsey
 And handsomely address ye.

There's few sae bonie, *nane sa guid*, none so good
 In a' King George' dominion;
 If ye should doubt the truth o' this—
 It's Bessy's *ain* opinion! own

*Hamlet of Faile, near Tarbolton.—J. H.

[Here we have a little of the "satirical seasoning" referred to by David Sillar, in note to next piece, and of which we have already seen a good sample in his address to "Saucy Tibbie." These verses, however, can hardly be considered as a song, and—as Chambers has observed—they are strikingly inferior to the poet's average efforts. It is rather singular that Chambers does not state where he got these lines, and on what grounds he became satisfied of their authenticity.]

AH, WOE IS ME, MY MOTHER DEAR.

Paraphrase of Jeremiah, 15th Chap., 10th verse.

(GLENRIDDELL MSS., 1874.)

AH, woe is me, my Mother dear!

A man of strife ye've born me:

For *sair* contention I *maun* bear : sore must

They hate, revile, and scorn me;

I ne'er could lend on bill or *band*, bond

That five per cent. might *blest* me; have blest

And borrowing, on the *tither* hand, other

The *de'il a ane wad* trust me. D—1 a one would

Yet I, a *coin-deni'd* wight, penniless

By Fortune quite discarded;

Ye see how I am, day and night,

By lad and lass blackguarded!

[Burns in 1785 records the remark—"I don't well know what is the reason of it, but somehow or other though I am, when I have a mind, pretty generally beloved; yet I never could get the art of commanding *respect*." Again, referring to his early boyhood, he says in his autobiography:—"At those years, I was by no means a favorite with anybody." David Sillar, speaking of Burns in 1781, says:—"His social disposition easily procured him acquaintances; but a certain satirical seasoning, while it set the rustic circle in a roar, was not unaccompanied by its kindred attendant,—suspicious fear. I recollect hearing his neighbours

observe *he had a great deal to say for himself*, but that they suspected his *principles*. He wore the only tied hair in the parish; and in the church, his plaid, which was of a particular colour, I think *fillemot*,* was wrapped in a particular manner round his shoulders." The poet's account of himself in the text has suggested the above quotations; but we feel rather at a loss to fix the particular period of composition. The verses stand recorded in the Glenriddell volume at Liverpool, in the poet's autograph, without any indication of date; but it may be assumed that he would be at least twenty-one years old before he could be concerned in "bills and bonds."

A corrupt copy of the verses occurs in the *Ettrick Shepherd's* Memoir of Burns, 1834, where they are entitled "Stanzas composed while sitting between the stilts of the plough." It seems that Burns had inscribed this paraphrase from Jeremiah on the fly-leaf of his own copy of Fergusson's Poems. That relic is now in the possession of J. T. Gibson-Craig, Esq., Edinburgh. Hogg may have seen that production, and quoted the words from memory. The words paraphrased are as follows:—"Woe is me, my mother, thou hast born me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth. I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me."]

MONTGOMERIE'S PEGGY.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

ALTHO' my bed were in yon muir,
Amang the heather, in my plaidie;
Yet happy, happy would I be,
Had I my dear Montgomerie's Peggy.

When o'er the hill beat surly storms,
And winter nights were dark and rainy;
I'd seek some dell, and in my arms
I'd shelter dear Montgomerie's Peggy.

Were I a Baron proud and high,
And horse and servants waiting ready;
Then a' 'twad gie o' joy to me,— 'twould give of
The sharin't with Montgomerie's Peggy. sharing of it

*A yellow-brown colour—from *feuille morte*, a dead leaf.

[Speaking of the earlier portion of the seven years he spent in Tarbolton Parish (1777 to 1784), the poet says he felt as much pleasure in being in the secret of half the amours in the parish, as ever did Premier in knowing the intrigues of half the courts in Europe. "Montgomerie's Peggy," he tells us, was a deity of his own for six or eight months. "I began the affair," he says, "merely in a *gaieté de cœur*, or, to tell the truth (what would scarcely be believed), a vanity of showing my parts in courtship, particularly my abilities at a *billet-doux*, which I always piqued myself upon, made me lay siege to her." Mrs. Begg, in her notes regarding this affair, says :—"The lady was housekeeper at Coilsfield House; my brother Robert had met her frequently at Tarboth Mill; they sat in the same church, and contracted an intimacy together; but she was engaged to another before ever they met. So, on her part, it was nothing but amusement, and on Burns' part, little more, from the way he speaks of it."] (The Rev. Geo. Gilfillan, in his edition, says she became Mrs. Derbyshire, and lived in London.—J. H.)

THE PLOUGHMAN'S LIFE.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

As I was a-wand'ring *ae* morning in spring, one
 I heard a young ploughman *sae* sweetly to sing; sa
 And as he was singin', *thir* words he did say,— these
 There's *nae* life like the ploughman's in the month o'
 sweet May. no

lark from

The *lav'rock* in the morning she'll rise *frae* her nest,
 And mount i' the air wi' the dew on her breast,
 And wi' the merry ploughman she'll whistle and sing,
 And at night she'll return to her nest back again.

[Gilbert Burns expressed to Cromek a strong doubt regarding his brother's authorship of these lines, as also of some other pieces found in his handwriting, and included with the *Reliques* of the Poet; but as the authorship of the "Bonie Muirhen"—one of the pieces referred to—has been since clearly traced to Burns, we do not feel at liberty to reject the lines in the text.]

THE RONALDS OF THE BENNALS.

(CHAMBERS, 1851.)

IN Tarbolton, ye *ken*, there are proper young men, know
 And proper young lasses and a', man;
 But ken ye the Ronalds that live in the Bennals,
 They carry the gree frae them a', * man.

Their father's a *laird*, and weel he can spare't, land-owner
Braid money to *tocher* them a', man; broad dower
 To proper young men, he'll *clink* in the hand count
Gowd guineas a hundred or twa, man. gold

There's ane they *ca'* Jean, I'll warrant ye've seen call
 As bonie a lass or as *braw*, man; finely dressed
 But for sense and guid taste she'll vie wi' the best,
 And a conduct that beautifies a', man.

The charms o' the *min'*, the langer they shine, mind
 The *mair* admiration they draw, man; more
 While peaches and cherries, and roses and lilies,
 They fade and they wither awa, man.

If ye be for Miss Jean, tak this *frae a frien'* from a friend
 A hint o' a rival or twa, man;
 The Laird o' Blackbyre *wad gang* through the fire,
 If that wad entice her awa, man. would go

The Laird o' Braehead has been on his speed,
 For mair than a *townmond* or twa, man; twelve months
 The Laird o' the Ford will *straught on a board*, be laid out
 If he *canna* get her at a', man. cannot dead

* Bear the palm from them all.

Then Anna comes in, the pride o' her kin,
 The boast of our bachelors a', man:
 Sae *sonsy* and sweet, sae fully complete,
 She steals our affections awa, man.

buxom

If I should detail the pick and the *wale*
 O' lasses that live *hereawa*, man,
 The *fau't* wad be mine if they didna shine
 The sweetest and best o' them a', man.

choice

hereabout

fault

I lo'e her mysel, but *darena weel* tell,
 My poverty keeps me in awe, man;
 For making o' rhymes, and working at times,
 Does little or *naething at a'*, man.

dare not well

nothing at all

Yet I *wadna* choose to let her refuse,
 Nor *hae't* in her power to say na, man:
 For though I be poor, unnoticed, obscure,
 My stomach's as proud as them a', man.

would not

have it

Though I canna ride in weel-booted pride,
 And flee o'er the hills like a *craw*, man,
 I can *haud* up my head wi' the best o' the breed,
 Though fluttering ever so *braw*, man.

crow

hold

fine

My coat and my vest, they are Scotch o' the best,
 O' pairs o' guid *breeks* I *hae* twa, man;
 And stockings and pumps to put on my stumps,
 And ne'er a wrang *steek* in them a', man.

breeches have

stitch

My *sarks* they are few, but five o' them new,
 Twal' hundred,* as white as the snaw, man,
 A ten-shillings hat, a Holland cravat;
 There are no mony poets sae *braw*, man.

shirts

fine

* Woven in a reed of 1200 divisions, and therefore considerably coarser than the "1700 linen" spoken of in *Tam o' Shanter*.

I never had *freens weel stockit in* means, friends well sup-
plied with }
 To leave me a hundred or twa, man ;
 Nae *weel-tocher'd* aunts, to wait on their *drants*, well-
dower'd }
 And wish them in hell for it a', man. whims

I never was *cannie* for hoarding o' money, prudent
 Or *claughtin 't* together at a', man ; grasping it
 I've little to spend, and naething to lend,
 But deevil a shilling I *awe*, man. owe

[The Bennals is a farm in the western part of the parish of Tarbolton, near Afton Lodge, about five miles from Lochlea. The two young women spoken of in this piece were the predominant belles of the district; being good-looking, fairly educated, and the children of a man reputed wealthy. Gilbert Burns wooed the elder sister, Jeanie Ronald, who, after a lengthened correspondence, refused him on account of his poverty. She became the wife of John Reid, a farmer at Langlands, not far from the Bennals. The younger sister, Annie, appears to have taken the poet's fancy a little; but he was too proud to afford her a chance of refusing him.

A few years after this period, one of the bard's letters gives us a glimpse of the "ups and downs of life" in connection with the *Ronalds of the Bennals*. Writing to his brother William in November, 1789, he says:—"The only Ayrshire news that I remember in which I think you will be interested, is that Mr. Ronald is bankrupt. You will easily guess, that from his insolent vanity in his sunshine of life, he will feel a little retaliation from those who thought themselves eclipsed by him."

Chambers has neglected to state whence he derived these verses; he merely indicates that they had appeared fugitively somewhere before he gave them a fixed place among the author's works. The small lairdships referred to in the fifth and sixth verses cannot be found in the Ordnance Map of Tarbolton parish; but more than one "Braehead" appears in the neighbouring parishes. "Ford" may be a contraction of Failford, near Tarbolton.]

SONG—HERE'S TO THY HEALTH.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1796.)

HERE's to thy health, my bonie lass,
 Gude night and joy be wi' thee;

I'll come *nae mair* to thy bower-door,
 To tell thee that I *lo'e* thee. no more
 O *dinna* think, my pretty pink, love
 But I can live without thee: do not
 I vow and swear I *dinna* care,
 How lang ye look about ye.

Thou'rt ay sae free informing me,
 Thou hast nae mind to marry;
 I'll be as free informing thee,
 Nae time *hae* I to tarry: have
 I *ken* thy *freens* try *ilka* means know friends every
Frae wedlock to delay thee; from
 Depending on some higher chance,
 But fortune may betray thee.

I ken they scorn my low estate,
 But that does never grieve me;
 For I'm as free as any *he*; man
Sma' siller will relieve me. little
 I'll count my health my greatest wealth,
 Sae lang as I'll enjoy it;
 I'll fear nae *scant*, I'll *bode* nae want, scarcity forbode
 As lang's as I get employment.

But far off fowls *hae* feathers fair,
 And, ay until ye try them,
 Tho' they seem fair, still have a care;
 They may prove as bad as I am.
 But at twal at night, when the moon shines bright,
 My dear, I'll come and see thee;
 For the man that loves his mistress weel,
 Nae travel makes him weary.

[Against our own instincts, we were at one time disposed to exclude this production from Burns' collected pieces, in deference to the dictum of his sister, Mrs. Begg, who pronounced it to be one of those familiar ditties commonly sung at rural firesides before his efforts in that way were known. The poet sent the song, along

with its very sprightly melody, to Johnson at some unascertained period; but it did not appear in the *Museum* till the year of the author's death, and his name is there attached to it. The words are not found in any collection of date prior to their publication in Johnson's work; and as Mrs. Begg would be no more than ten years old when, as we conjecture, this song was composed by her brother, she might naturally, at some after period, mistake it for an old song. It is in every respect characteristic of Burns' manner and sentiments in early manhood; and the strathspey tune to which it is set, suggests his early dancing-school experiences, and the occasional balls of the Tarbolton Bachelors.]

THE LASS OF CESSNOCK BANKS.*

(ALDINE ED., 1839.)

ON Cessnock banks a lassie dwells,
 Could I describe her shape and mien;
 Our lasses a' she far excels,
 An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een. eyes

She's sweeter than the morning dawn,
 When rising Phœbus first is seen;
 And dew-drops twinkle o'er the lawn;
 An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

She's stately like yon youthful ash,
 That grows the cowslip *braes* between, heights
 And drinks the stream with vigour fresh;
 An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

She's spotless like the flow'ring thorn,
 With flow'rs so white and leaves so green,
 When purest in the dewy morn;
 An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

*Cessnock "Water," flows from the southeast, passes close by Mauchline and Mossiel, and falls into the Irvine about midway between Kilmarnock and Galston.—J. H.

Her looks are like the vernal May,
When ev'ning Phœbus shines serene;
While birds rejoice on every spray;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her hair is like the curling mist,
That climbs the mountain-sides at e'en,
When flow'r-reviving rains are past;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her forehead's like the show'ry bow,
When gleaming sunbeams intervene
And gild the distant mountain's brow;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her cheeks are like yon crimson gem,
The pride of all the flowery scene,
Just opening on its thorny stem;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her bosom's like the nightly snow,
When pale the morning rises keen;
While hid the murm'ring streamlets flow;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her lips are like *yon* cherries ripe,
That sunny walls from Boreas screen;
They tempt the taste and charm the sight;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

yonder

Her teeth are like a flock of sheep,
With fleeces newly washen clean;
That slowly mount the rising steep;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her breath is like the fragrant breeze,
That gently stirs the blossom'd bean;
When Phœbus sinks behind the seas;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

Her voice is like the ev'ning thrush,
That sings on Cessnock banks unseen;
While his mate sits nestling in the bush;
An' she has twa sparkling rogueish een.

But it's not her air, her form, her face,
Tho' matching beauty's fabled queen;
'Tis the mind that shines in ev'ry grace,
An' chiefly in her rogueish een.

[This must have been composed just before the poet's short sojourn in the town of Irvine. He was passionately in love with the subject of this poem, or "Song of Similes," as it has been called. Her name was Ellison Begbie, her father being a small farmer in Galston parish, and she herself at that time in service with a family who resided near Cessnock water, about two miles northeast from Lochlea. Burns has made no distinct reference to her in his autobiography, although she seems to have been the heroine of a few of his most admired lyrics. His sister, Mrs. Begg, about thirty years ago, first revealed the fact that the four love-letters to "My dear E." in Currie's first edition (and which were withdrawn from subsequent issues of that work) were addressed to Ellison Begbie, who, after some intimacy and correspondence, rejected his suit, and soon married another lover. Referring to his desponding condition at Irvine, he writes:—"To crown my distress, a *belle-fille* whom I adored, and who had pledged her soul to meet me in the field of matrimony, jilted me with peculiar circumstances of mortification." This misleading allusion, viewed in connection with the letters he addressed to her, and with what he had written in his Common-place Book about "Montgomerie's Peggy," created much confusion in the minds of the poet's annotators, until Mrs. Begg set these matters right.

As might be predicated of one who could inspire sentiments and imagery like those contained in these verses, the subject of them is described by the poet's sister as having been a superior person, and a general favourite in her neighbourhood. Burns himself, in

one of his letters, thus addresses her :—"All these charming qualities, heightened by an education much beyond anything I have ever met in any woman I ever dared to approach, have made an impression on my heart that I do not think the world can ever efface."

Cromek, in 1808, first made the world acquainted with this production, in a somewhat imperfect form. He traced out the subject of it as a married lady resident in Glasgow, and from her own lips noted down the words to the extent of her recollection. Pickering's version, here given, was printed from the poet's manuscript, recovered from some other source. A whole stanza is devoted to each of her charms, commencing with her "two sparkling rogueish een," and embracing every personal and mental grace. At verse six he comes to her *hair*, and thereafter in succession he descants on her *forehead*, her *cheeks*, her *bosom*, her *lips*, her *teeth*, her *breath*, her *voice*, and lastly her *mind*. At verse nine, through an awkward inadvertency in transcribing, he sets down "Her teeth" instead of "Her bosom," to which the similitude used very appropriately applies; and the *teeth* of his charmer have full justice done them in stanza eleven. This slip of the pen on the transcriber's part we have here corrected. In the MS. the author has directed the words to be sung to the tune of "If he be a butcher neat and trim"—whatever that air may be; which confirms his own statement that he could never compose a lyric without *crooning* a melody in his mind, to aid his inspiration and regulate the rhythm of his verses.]

SONG—BONIE PEGGY ALISON.

Tune—"The Braes o' Balquhiddy."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

Chor.—And I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
 And I'll kiss thee o'er again;
 And I'll kiss thee yet, yet,
 My bonie Peggy Alison.

Ilk care and fear when thou art near,
 I ever mair defy them, O!

each

Young kings upon their hansel throne *
 Are no sae blest as I am, O!
 And I'll kiss thee yet, yet, &c.

When in my arms, wi' a' thy charms,
 I clasp my countless treasure, O!
 I seek *nae mair* o' Heaven to share no more
 Than *sic* a moment's pleasure, O! such
 And I'll kiss thee yet, yet, &c.

And by thy *een sae* bonie blue, eyes so
 I swear I'm thine for ever, O!
 And on thy lips I seal my vow,
 And break it shall I never, O!
 And I'll kiss thee yet, yet, &c.

[This and the song which immediately follows (*Mary Morison*) long went wandering in search of the living originals; but no fair damsels nor *sonsie lasses* in the parish of Tarbolton, bearing such names, were ever heard of. The poet, in sending the latter song to George Thomson, expressly told him it was "a juvenile production;" and as he at the same time admitted that all his earlier love-songs were the breathings of real passion—a legend of his heart being inscribed on each of them—a "heroine-hunt" for the inspirers of them was the eventful result. Gilbert Burns was applied to for information regarding *Mary Morison*, and he replied that she was also the subject of some light verses, beginning, "And I'll kiss thee yet." This clue suggested to the present writer that the poet had simply disguised these juvenile productions by altering the names a little. Mrs. Begg's information regarding her brother's earnest passion for the *Lass of Cessnock Banks*—Ellison, or Alison Begbie, by name—started the natural idea that Burns must have attempted to weave her name into some snatch of song. Her surname, however, being so very prosaic and untunable, what was a poor poet to do? His object could be attained only by compromise, and that might be accomplished to some extent by transposing *Alison Begbie* into "Peggy Alison." Let us take for granted that such was the case with

* "Hansel" means the *first-fruit* of an achievement, or of a particular field, or season; hence a gift at some particular season, at the New Year, or on some particular occasion, is so called. The term "maiden throne" would explain the poet's phrase here.—J. H.

the song in our text, and then it follows that *Ellison Begbie* was also the inspirer of its charming companion-song, *Mary Morison*. The character of "My dear E," is displayed in every line of it:—

A thought ungentle canna be
The thought of Peggy Ellison.

Only the two latter stanzas of the text, with the chorus, are given in Johnson's publication. The opening verse is from Cromeke (1808). Stephen Clarke, the musical editor of the *Museum*, inscribed on the printer's copy of the music his feelings in these words:—"I am charmed with this song *almost* as much as the lover is with Peggy Alison."]

SONG—MARY MORISON.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

O MARY, at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the *trysted* hour ! appointed
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor :
How blythely wad I *bide the stoure*, endure the turmoil
A weary slave *frae* sun to sun, from
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen, when to the trembling string yester-even
The dance *gaed* thro' the lighted ha', went
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw:
Tho' this was fair, and that was *braw*, gay
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd, and said amang them a',
"Ye are *na* Mary Morison." not

Oh, Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
Wha for thy sake *wad* gladly die ? would
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only *faut* is loving thee ? whose fault

If love for love thou wilt *na gie*, not give
 At least be pity to me shown;
 A thought ungentle *canna* be cannot
 The thought o' Mary Morison."

[The long note to the preceding song will help to shorten this one, as it is held to apply to the same subject. The "trembling string," and the "lighted ha'" of the *second stanza* could in reality refer only to the earnest efforts of a poor fiddler at a village practising on the sanded floor of some school-room; yet see how the poet's fancy can "take its wing," and exalt the commonest object. Hazlitt says, in respect to this lyric,— "Of all the productions of Burns, the pathetic and serious love-songs which he has left behind him, in the manner of old ballads, are perhaps those which take the deepest and most lasting hold of the mind. Such are the lines to 'Mary Morison,' those beginning 'Here's a health to ane I loe dear;' and the song 'O my love is like a red, red rose.'"

The tune to which the poet composed this song was "Duncan Davidson" which is capable of much pathos when performed in slow time. However, that air having been already well-suited with "canty" words, the late John Wilson, Scottish vocalist, conferred an accession of popularity to *Mary Morison* by wedding her to "The Miller," a beautiful tune of the same character as that selected by Burns.]

WINTER: A DIRGE.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

As I am what the men of the world, if they knew of such a man, would call a whimsical mortal, I have various sources of pleasure and enjoyment which are in a manner peculiar to myself, or some here and there such other out-of-the-way person. Such is the peculiar pleasure I take in the season of Winter more than the rest of the year. This, I believe, may be partly owing to my misfortunes giving my mind a melancholy cast; but there is something even in the

Mighty tempest and the hoary waste
 Abrupt and deep stretch'd o'er the buried earth,

which raises the mind to a serious sublimity, favorable to every thing great and noble. There is scarcely any earthly

object gives me more—I don't know if I should call it pleasure, but something which exalts me, something which enraptures me, than to walk in the sheltered side of a wood or high plantation in a cloudy winter day, and hear a stormy wind howling among the trees and raving o'er the plain. It is my best season for devotion; my mind is rapt up in a kind of enthusiasm to Him who, in the pompous language of Scripture, "walks on the wings of the wind." In one of these seasons, just after a tract of misfortunes, I composed the following song,—Tune, "M'Pherson's Farewell."—*Common-place Book, April, 1784.*

THE wintry west extends his blast,	
And hail and rain does <i>blaw</i> ;	blow
Or, the stormy north sends driving forth	
The blinding sleet and <i>snaw</i> :	snow
While, tumbling brown, the <i>burn</i> comes down,	rivulet
And roars <i>frae</i> bank to <i>brae</i> ;	from height
And bird and beast in covert rest,	
And pass the heartless day.	

"The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,"*
 The joyless winter day
 Let others fear, to me more dear
 Than all the pride of May:
 The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
 My griefs it seems to join;
 The leafless trees my fancy please,
 Their fate resembles mine!

Thou Power Supreme whose mighty scheme
 These woes of mine fulfil,
 Here, firm I rest; they must be best,
 Because they are 'Thy will!
 Then all I want—O do 'Thou grant
 This one request of mine!—
 Since to enjoy 'Thou dost deny,
 Assist me to *resign*.

to be resigned

* Dr. Young.—*R. B.*

[We concur with Chambers in assigning the date of this piece to the time of the poet's residence in Irvine, during the winter of 1781-82. Writing in April, 1784, the author tells us that he composed it at the period referred to in his head-note to the following Prayer, "just after a tract of misfortunes." This corresponds with the tone of his melancholy letter to his father, written from Irvine, and also with what he narrates in his autobiography, of his partner in trade having robbed him, and his flax-dressing shop, taking fire on New Year's morning, 1782, by which he was left "like a true poet, not worth a sixpence."]

A PRAYER UNDER THE PRESSURE OF VIOLENT ANGUISH.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

There was a certain period of my life that my spirit was broke by repeated losses and disasters, which threatened and indeed effected the utter ruin of my fortune. My body, too, was attacked by that most dreadful distemper, a hypochondria or confirmed melancholy; in this wretched state, the recollection of which makes me yet shudder, I hung my harp on the willow trees, except in some lucid intervals, in one of which I composed the following:—

O THOU Great Being! what Thou art,
Surpasses me to know;
Yet sure I am, that known to Thee
Are all Thy works below.

Thy creature here before Thee stands,
All wretched and distress;
Yet sure those ills that wring my soul
Obey Thy high behest.

Sure Thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath!
O, free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death!

But, if I must afflicted be,
To suit some wise design;
Then man my soul with firm resolves,
To bear and not repine!

[The composition of these verses must be assigned to the same period as that of the foregoing. Writing in December, 1787, to his Irvine acquaintance, Richard Brown, the poet thus remarked:—"Do you recollect the Sunday we spent together in Eglinton woods? You told me, on my repeating some verses to you, that you wondered I could resist the temptation of sending verses of such merit to a magazine. It was from this remark I derived that idea of my own pieces which encouraged me to endeavour at the character of a poet."]

PARAPHRASE OF THE FIRST PSALM.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

THE man in life wherever plac'd,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wicked's way,
Nor learns their guilty lore!

Nor from the seat of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God.

That man shall flourish like the trees,
Which by the streamlets grow;
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.

But he whose blossom buds in guilt
Shall to the ground be cast,
And, like the rootless stubble, tost
Before the sweeping blast.

For why? that God the good adore,
 Hath giv'n them peace and rest,
 But hath decreed that wicked men
 Shall ne'er be truly blest.

[This and the Psalm immediately following evidently belong to the same period of the author's life as the two preceding pieces.]

THE FIRST SIX VERSES OF THE NINETIETH PSALM VERSIFIED.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

O THOU, the first, the greatest friend
 Of all the human race!
 Whose strong right hand has ever been
 Their stay and dwelling-place!

Before the mountains heav'd their heads
 Beneath Thy forming hand,
 Before this ponderous globe itself,
 Arose at Thy command;

That Pow'r which rais'd and still upholds
 This universal frame,
 From countless, unbeginning time
 Was ever still the same.

Those mighty periods of years
 Which seem to us so vast,
 Appear no more before thy sight
 Than yesterday that's past.

Thou giv'st the word: Thy creature, man,
 Is to existence brought;
 Again Thou says't, "Ye sons of men,
 Return ye into nought!"

Thou layest them, with all their cares,
In everlasting sleep ;
As with a flood Thou tak'st them off
With overwhelming sweep.

They flourish like the morning flow'r,
In beauty's pride array'd ;
But long ere night—cut down, it lies
All wither'd and decay'd.

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

O THOU unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope and fear !
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps I must appear !

If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun—
As something loudly in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done—

Thou know'st that Thou hast formèd me
With passions wild and strong ;
And list'ning to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
Do Thou, All-Good—for such Thou art—
In shades of darkness hide.

Where with intention I have err'd,
 No other plea I have,
 But, Thou art good; and Goodness still
 Delighteth to forgive.

[This composition appears, under the date of August, 1784, in the Common-place Book, as "A Prayer when fainting fits and other alarming symptoms of a pleurisy, or some other dangerous disorder, which indeed still threaten me, first put nature on the alarm." These words distinctly point back to a date more or less remote; consequently those editors who have assumed this Prayer and its relative prose passage to apply to the Mossgiel period of the author's life are at fault in their chronology. The verses are marked by extraordinary vigour, and have been much criticised by those who will be content with no religious poetry, except such as deals in substitutional salvation.]

(Chambers gives the date as 1784. The style of composition is very far superior to and more finished than anything in his Mount Oliphant period. It seems to me to be quite in keeping with his twenty-fifth year. The second and third stanzas especially are not the expressions of a mere youth. It was at Lochlea, says Gilbert Burns, that "the foundation was laid of certain habits in my brother's character, which afterwards became but too prominent." This poem was written, then, at least a considerable time after he went to Lochlea, and quite probably when he was at Mossgiel.—J. H.)

STANZAS, ON THE SAME OCCASION.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

WHY am I loth to leave this earthly scene?

Have I so found it full of pleasing charms—
 Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between—
 Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms?
 Is it departing pangs my soul alarms?

Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode?
 For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms:

I tremble to approach an angry God,
 And justly smart beneath His sin-avenging rod.

Fain would I say, "Forgive my foul offence!"

Fain promise never more to disobey;

But, should my Author health again dispense,

Again I might desert fair virtue's way;

Again in folly's path might go astray;

Again exalt the brute and sink the man;

Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,

Who act so counter heavenly mercy's plan?

Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation ran?

O Thou great Governor of all below!

If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,

Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,

Or still the tumult of the raging sea:

With that controlling pow'r assist ev'n me,

Those headlong furious passions to confine,

For all unfit I feel my pow'rs to be,

To rule their torrent in th' allow'd line;

O, aid me with Thy help, Omnipotence Divine!

[This composition is set down in the poet's Common-place Book immediately following the preceding, and entitled "Misgivings in the Hour of Despondency and Prospect of Death." He copied it from thence into the Stair manuscript of early pieces (now dismembered and scattered abroad). It is there headed—"Misgivings of Despondency on the Approach of the Gloomy Monarch of the Grave." It was also inserted in the manuscript book of like pieces presented to Mrs. Dunlop, under the heading—"Stanzas on the same occasion (as the preceding) in the manner of *Beattie's Minstrel*." That collection is also cut up and scattered; and these verses, apparently once forming part of it are exhibited within the Burns monument at Edinburgh. On comparing the copy in the text with the earlier ones, we find that the versification underwent some polishing in 1787, to fit it for appearance in the author's Edinburgh edition.

This piece acquires a certain interest from the manner in which Dr. John Brown (author of "Rab and his Friends") has introduced an anecdote concerning it in his little book—"Pet Marjorie: a Story of Child Life Fifty Years Ago" (1863).]

FICKLE FORTUNE: "A FRAGMENT."

(CROMEK, 1808.)

THOUGH fickle Fortune has deceived me,
 She promis'd fair and perform'd but ill;
 Of mistress, friends, and wealth bereav'd me,
 Yet I bear a heart shall support me still.—

I'll act with prudence as far as I'm able,
 But if success I must never find,
 Then come misfortune, I bid thee welcome,
 I'll meet thee with an undaunted mind.

[The poet has set this down in his Common-place Book, under date, September, 1785, and thus remarks:—"The above was an extempore, under the pressure of a heavy train of misfortunes, which indeed threatened to undo me altogether. It was just at the close of that dreadful period mentioned (when the prayer 'O Thou great Being' was composed—see p. 28), and though the weather has brightened up a little with me, yet there has always been since, a 'tempest brewing round me in the grim sky' of futurity, which I pretty plainly see will some time or other—perhaps ere long—overwhelm me, and drive me into some doleful dell to pine in solitary, squalid wretchedness."

The reader has already seen, at page 7, the four lines which form the first half of the above fragment. The poet here reproduces them with an important variation in line third, which he appropriately alters from

"Of many a joy and hope bereav'd me."

These eight lines altogether read more like rough prose than measured verse; they have at the same time a certain earnest vigour, and in sentiment are in unison with all he wrote at that period. He says the fragment was constructed "in imitation of an old Scotch song well known among the country ingle-sides," and of that he quotes one verse thus:—

When clouds in skies do come together,
 To hide the brightness of the sun,
 There will surely be some pleasant weather
 When a' *thir* storms are spent and gone.

these

He tells us that he has noted that verse "both to mark the song and tune I mean, and likewise as a debt I owe to the author, as the repeating of that verse has lighted up my flame a thousand times."]

RAGING FORTUNE: FRAGMENT OF SONG.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

O RAGING Fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low!
O raging Fortune's withering blast
Has laid my leaf full low!

My stem was fair, my bud was green,
My blossom sweet did blow;
The dew fell fresh, the sun rose mild,
And made my branches grow;

But luckless Fortune's northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low,—
But luckless Fortune's northern storms
Laid a' my blossoms low!

all

[This sketch was produced at the same time with the preceding. Our poet records in his Common-place Book that he then "set about composing an air in the old Scotch style. I am (he adds) not musical scholar enough to prick down my tune properly, so it can never see the light, . . . but these were the verses I composed to suit it." As we do with the verses at page 38, we omit the capital letter "O" at the end of every second line, to avoid the unpleasant effect in reading.]

IMPROMPTU—"I'LL GO AND BE A SODGER."

(CURRIE, 1800.)

O WHY the deuce should I repine,
And be an ill foreboder?
I'm twenty-three, and five feet nine,
I'll go and be a *sodger*!

soldier

I gat some *gear* wi' *mickle* care, cash much
 I held it weel thegither;
 But now it's *gane*, and something *mair*— gone more
 I'll go and be a sodger!

[This is the sequel to the poet's previous penitential bemoanings, and apostrophes to "Fickle Fortune." "Come, stubborn pride and unshrinking resolution!"—he wrote to a lady friend, on receipt of what he deemed ruinous intelligence—"accompany me through this, to me, miserable world! Your friendship I think I can count on though I should date my letters from a marching regiment. Early in life, and all my life, I reckoned on a recruiting drum as my forlorn hope."]

The poet was now at home from Irvine. He reached Lochlea about the end of March; and Chambers mentions, in 1856, that the stone chimney-piece of the little garret room where Burns slept in his father's house still bore the initials "R. B.," with the date 1782, supposed to have been cut by the poet's own hand. That relic no longer exists.]

(In Burns' day, and long after, seven years was the time required to serve as an apprentice to any trade. Burns, being now twenty-four years of age, was too old to learn a trade; therefore he, like many young men in a similar position, looked to enlisting in the army as a last resource. The Scotch have always been a warlike people. The natural resource of every young Scotchman in difficulty was to enlist.

G. G.

SONG—"NO CHURCHMAN AM I."

Tune—"Prepare, my dear Brethren."

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

No churchman am I for to rail and to write,
 No statesman nor soldier to plot or to fight,
 No sly man of business contriving a snare,
 For a big-belly'd bottle's the whole of my care.

The peer I don't envy, I give him his bow;
 I scorn not the peasant, tho' ever so low;
 But a club of good fellows, like those that are here,
 And a bottle like this, are my glory and care.

Here passes the squire on his brother—his horse;
 There centum per centum, the cit with his purse;
 But see you the *Crown** how it waves in the air?
 There a big-belly'd bottle still eases my care.

The wife of my bosom, alas! she did die;
 For sweet consolation to church I did fly;
 I found that old Solomon provèd it fair,
 That a big-belly'd bottle's a cure for all care.

I once was persuaded a venture to make;
 A letter inform'd me that all was to wreck;
 But the pursy old landlord just waddl'd up stairs,
 With a glorious bottle that ended my cares.

"Life's cares they are comforts"†—a maxim laid
 down
 By the Bard, what d'ye call him? that wore the black
 gown;
 And faith I agree with th' old prig to a hair;
 For a big-belly'd bottle's a heav'n of a care.

A STANZA ADDED IN A MASON LODGE.

Then fill up a bumper and make it o'erflow,
 And honors Masonic prepare for to throw;
 May ev'ry true Brother of the Compass and Square
 Have a big-belly'd bottle when harass'd with care.

[We are inclined to set this down as a production of 1782. The Bachelors' Club was instituted at the close of 1780, and the poet was admitted an apprentice Free Mason in July, 1781, just before he proceeded to Irvine. He was passed and raised on 1st October following, on which occasion, if he was present at Tarbolton, he must have travelled from Irvine for the purpose.

The song in the text has none of the elements of popularity

* Burns here refers to the sign of "The Crown Tavern."—J. H.

† Young's "Night Thoughts."—R. B.

in it, and seems more like an imitation of an English song than a spontaneous outburst of his own genius. Indeed, in the collection of songs which he studied so much during his boyhood, there is one that appears to have been his model: the closing line of one of its stanzas being

"And a big-belly'd bottle's a mighty good thing."]

BALLAD—MY FATHER WAS A FARMER.

Tune—"The weaver and his shuttle, O."

(CROMEK, 1808.)

My father was a farmer upon the Carrick* border,
And carefully he bred me in decency and order;
He bade me act a manly part, though I had ne'er a
farthing';
For without an honest manly heart, no man was worth
regarding.

Then out into the world my course I did determine;
Tho' to be rich was not my wish, yet to be great was
charming:
My talents they were not the worst, nor yet my edu-
cation:
Resolv'd was I, at least to try, to mend my situation.

In many a way, and vain essay, I courted Fortune's
favor;
Some cause unseen still stept between, to frustrate each
endeavor;
Sometimes by foes I was o'erpower'd, sometimes by
friends forsaken;
And when my hope was at the top, I still was worst
mistaken.

* Carrick is the southernmost of the three districts into which Ayrshire is divided, and lies between the Doon and the borders of Galloway. Burns' father did not live in Carrick, but in Kyle, close on the Carrick border.—J. H.

'Then sore harass'd, and tir'd at last, with Fortune's
vain delusion,
I dropt my schemes, like idle dreams, and came to
this conclusion :
The past was bad, and the future hid, its good or ill
untried ;
But the present hour was in my pow'r, and so I would
enjoy it.

No help, nor hope, nor view had I, nor person to
befriend me ;
So I must toil, and sweat, and moil, and labour to
sustain me ;
To plough and sow, to reap and mow, my father bred
me early ;
For one, he said, to labour bred, was a match for
Fortune fairly.

Thus all obscure, unknown, and poor, thro' life I'm
doom'd to wander,
'Till down my weary bones I lay in everlasting slum-
ber ;
No view nor care, but shun whate'er might breed me
pain or sorrow ;
I live to-day as well's I may, regardless of to-morrow.

But cheerful still, I am as well as a monarch in his
palace,
'Tho' Fortune's frown still hunts me down, with all
her wonted malice :
I make indeed my daily bread, but ne'er can make it
farther :
But as daily bread is all I need, I do not much regard
her.

When sometimes by my labour, I earn a little money,
Some unforeseen misfortune comes gen'rally upon me ;

Mischance, mistake, or by neglect, or my goodnatur'd
 folly:
 But come what will, I've sworn it still, I'll ne'er be
 melancholy.

All you who follow wealth and power with unremitting
 ardour,
 The more in this you look for bliss, you leave your
 view the farther:
 Had you the wealth Potosi boasts, or nations to adore
 you,
 A cheerful, honest-hearted clown I will prefer before
 you.

[The poet describes the above as "a wild rhapsody, miserably deficient in versification, but as the sentiments are the genuine feelings of my heart, for that reason I have a particular pleasure in conning it over."

At the close of each line of the ballad, the letter "O" is introduced in the Author's MS. to make it fit the tune to which he composed it. It has a disturbing effect in reading, and therefore we withdraw it from our text for the present. In an after-part of the work the verses will be given *verbatim*, as part of the Common-place Book.]

JOHN BARLEYCORN: A BALLAD.*

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

THERE went three kings into the east,
 Three kings both great and high,
 And they *hæe* sworn a solemn oath
 John Barleycorn should die.

have

* This is partly composed on the plan of an old song known by the same name.—R. B.

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
Put clods upon his head,
And they have sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerful Spring came kindly on,
And show'rs began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surprised them all.

The sultry suns of Summer came,
And he grew thick and strong;
His head weel arm'd wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober Autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

His colour sicken'd more and more,
He faded into age;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

They've *taen* a weapon, long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
Then ty'd him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

taken

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore;
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

They fill'd up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heav'd in John Barleycorn—
There, let him sink or swim.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe;
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
They toss'd him to and fro.

They wasted, o'er a scorching flame,
The marrow of his bones;
But a miller us'd him worst of all,
For he crush'd him 'tween two stones.

And they hae *taen* his very heart's blood, taken
And drank it round and round;
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise;
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
'Twill heighten all his joy:
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
'Tho' the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland!

[In the Common-place Book this is set down immediately before *Poor Mailie*, and all that we know concerning the date of the two poems is that they were written at Lochlea, prior to the year 1784. Gilbert has said, regarding the date of the latter, that his two younger brothers, William and John, then acted as drivers in the ploughing operations of the poet and himself.

John, in 1782, would be thirteen years old—a very likely age for him to commence duties of that kind; so by this mode of calculation we would arrive at a fair conclusion, were we to hold that *John Barleycorn* and *Poor Mailie* were composed shortly after Burns' return from Irvine in the early spring of 1782. It is not likely that the poet ever saw the ancient ballad of "John Barleycorn" in any collection. A copy in the Pepys' library, at Cambridge, furnished the old version included by Robert Jamieson in his collection of Ballads, 2 vols., 1808. In the poet's note to the Ballad he says:—"I once heard the old song that goes by this name sung, and being very fond of it, and remembering only two or three verses of it, viz., the 1st, 2d and 3d, with some scraps, I have interwoven them here and there in the following piece." The poet could never be induced to correct the defective grammar in the opening line, deeming, we suppose, with Shakespeare, that bad grammar is sometimes a positive beauty. James Hogg had the same feeling in regard to his favourite song "When the kye comes hame." In another of Burns' most admired Ballads,—"There was five Carlines in the south"—evidently composed on the model of *John Barleycorn*—he retains the "bad grammar," and directs the song to be sung to the tune of *Chevy Chase*. We cannot tell whether that air was the same above referred to, which he "once heard sung."]

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR MAILIE.

THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE,—AN UNCO MOURNFU' TALE. ewe
extremely
(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

As Mailie, an' her lambs thegither,	
Was ae day nibblin on the <i>tether</i> ,	halter
Upon her <i>cloot</i> she <i>coost</i> a hitch,	hoof cast
An' owre she <i>warsl'd</i> in the ditch:	tumbled struggling
There, groanin, dying, she did lie,	
When Hughoc* he cam <i>doytin</i> by.	walking stupidly

Wi' <i>glowrin een</i> , and lifted han's	staring eyes
Poor Hughoc like a statue stan's;	

* A neibour herd-callant, about three-fourths as wise as other folk.—R. B.

He saw her days were near-hand ended,
 But, *wae's my heart!* he could na mend it! woe is me
 He gaped wide, but naething *spak*, spoke
 At length poor Mailie silence *brak*. broke

"O thou, *whase* lamentable face whose
 Appears to mourn my wofu' case!
 My dying words attentive hear,
 An' bear them to my Master dear.

"Tell him, if e'er again he keep
 As *muckle gear* as buy a sheep— much cash
 O, bid him never tie them *mair*, more
 Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair!
 But *ca'* them out to park or hill, drive
 An' let them wander at their will:
 So may his flock increase, an' grow
 To scores o' lambs, and packs o' *woo'*! wool

"Tell him, he was a Master *kin'* kind
 An' ay was guid to me an' mine;
 An' now my dying charge I *gie* him, give
 My helpless lambs, I trust them wi' him.

"O, bid him save their harmless lives,
 Frae dogs, an' *tods*, an' butcher's knives! foxes
 But gie them *guid* cow-milk their fill, good
 Till they be fit to *fend* themsel; provide for
 An' *tent* them duly, e'en an' morn, attend to
 Wi' *taets* o' hay an' *rippts* o' corn. small quantities handfuls

"An' may they never learn the *gaets*, ways
 Of ither vile, *wanrestfu'* pets— unrestful
 To slink thro' *slaps*, an' *reave* an' steal, gaps rob
 At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' *kail*! colewort
 So may they, like their great *forbears*, ancestors
 For *monie* a year come thro' the sheers: many
 So wives will gie them bits o' bread,
 An' bairns *greet* for them when they're dead. weep

“My poor *toop-lamb*, my son an’ heir, *tup-lamb*
 O, bid him breed him up wi’ care!
 An’ if he live to be a beast,
 To put some *havins* in his breast! *manners*

“An’ warn him—what I *winna* name *will not*
 To stay content wi’ *yowes* at hame; *ewes*
 An’ no to *rin* an’ wear his *cloots*, *run* *hoofs*
 Like *ither menseless*, graceless brutes. *other unmannerly*

“An’ *niest*, my *yowie*, silly thing, *next* *little ewe*
 Gude keep thee *frae* a tether string! *from*
 O, may thou ne’er *forgather up*, *hold intercourse*
 Wi’ ony *blastit*, moorland toop; *worthless*
 But ay keep mind to *moop an’ mell*, *associate*
 Wi’ sheep o’ credit like thysel!

“And now, my *bairns*, wi’ my last breath, *children*
 I *lea’e* my blessin wi’ you *baith*: *leave* *both*
 An’ when you think up’ your mither,
 Mind to be kind to *ane anither*. *one another*

“Now, honest Hughoc, *dinna* fail, *do not*
 To tell my master a’ my tale;
 An’ bid him burn this cursed tether,
 An’ for thy pains thou’se get my *blather*.” *bladder*

‘This said, poor Mailie turn’d her head,
 An’ clos’d her een amang the dead!

[Carlyle considers this the poet’s happiest effort of its peculiar kind: he classes it with the *Address to a Mouse*, and the *Auld Farmer’s Mare*, but holds that “this has even more of sportive tenderness in it.” It was composed—just as we now see it—one afternoon while engaged with his plough on the slopes of Lochlea, his brother Gilbert being at work with his team on another part of the field. The poet’s youngest brother, *John*—of whose early

death, by the way, not a syllable has been ever heard—drove the horses, while the musing bard guided his plough in the even rig. Gilbert narrates the incident to this effect:—As they were setting out about noon, with their teams, a curious-looking, awkward boy, named Hugh Wilson, ran up to them in a very excited manner, and with a rueful countenance, announced that poor Mailie had got entangled in her tether and was lying in the ditch. It had never occurred to the terror-stricken “Hughoc” that he might have lent a hand in lifting her up: Mailie, however, was soon rescued from her peril and lived—it is hoped—to see her bairns’ bairns. This timely intervention of the half-witted callant was the means of sending down the name of poor Mailie along with his own to distant posterity, for his comical consternation and pathetic interest in her fate suggested the poem to Burns.]

POOR MAILIE’S ELEGY.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi’ *saut* tears tricklin down your nose; salt
Our bardie’s fate is at a close,

Past a’ *remead*! remedy
The last, sad *cape-stane* o’ his woes cope-stone
Poor Mailie’s dead!

It’s no the loss o’ *warl’s gear*, worldly wealth
That could sae bitter draw the tear,
Or mak our bardie, *dowie*, wear melancholy
The mournin’ weed:
He’s lost a friend an’ *neebor* dear, neighbor
In Mailie dead.

Thro’ a’ the town she trotted by him;
A lang half-mile she could descry him;
Wi’ kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi’ speed:
A friend mair faithfu’ ne’er cam nigh him,
Than Mailie dead.

I *wat* she was a sheep o' sense,
An' could behave hersel wi' *mense*:
I'll say't, she never brak a fence,
Thro' thievish greed.
Our bardie, lanely, keeps the *spence**
Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the *howe*, valley
Her livin' image in her yowe
Comes bleatin' till him, owre the *knowe*, knoll
For bits o' bread;
An' down the briny pearls *rowe* roll
For Mailie dead.

She was nae *get* o' moorlan tips, offspring
Wi' *tauted* *ket*, an' hairy hips; matted fleece
For her *forbears* were brought in ships, ancestors
Frae 'yont the Tweed :
A bonier *fleesh* ne'er cross'd the *clips* fleece shears
Than Mailie's—dead.

Wae worth that man wha first did shape
That vile, *wanchancie* thing—a *raep*!
It maks guid fellows *girn* an' gape,
Wi' chokin dread;
An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape
For Mailie dead.

O, a' ye bards on bonie Doon!
An' wha on Ayr your *chanter's* tune! bag-pipes
Come, join the melancholious *croon* chant
O' Robin's reed!
His heart will never get aboon—
His Mailie's dead!

*The "spence" (retiring-room or parlor) of a farm house, from being originally generally behind the kitchen or "but," was known also as the "ben." Hence, even when not behind the kitchen, but in the other end of the house, it retained its name of "ben."—J. H.

[That this poem was composed at a period somewhat later than the "Dying Words," is probable from the fact that the "Elegy" is not inscribed in the poet's Common-place Book, while the main poem is recorded there, almost *verbatim* as afterwards published. Dr. Currie informs us (Vol. III., p. 395, Ed. 1801) that in preparing the "Elegy" for the press, the poet substituted the present sixth verse for the following:—

"She was nae get o' coarse, gaunt rams,	
Wi' <i>woo</i> like goats, and legs like <i>trams</i> :	wool shafts
She was the flower o' Fairlie lambs—	
A famous breed ;	
Now Robin, <i>greetin</i> , chews the hams,	weeping
O' Mailie dead."	

The substituted stanza is doubtless a great improvement ; yet we cannot but regret with Currie that "Fairlie lambs" should lose the honor once intended for them. Fairlie was the first place in Ayrshire where the poet's father, in early manhood, obtained employment.]

SONG—THE RIGS O' BARLEY.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

It was upon a Lammas night,	
When corn <i>rigs</i> are bonie,	ridges
Beneath the moon's unclouded light,	
I held awa to Annie ;	
The time flew by, <i>wi' tentless</i> heed ;	with careless
Till, 'tween the late and early,	
Wi' sma' persuasion she agreed	
To see me thro' the barley.	
Corn rigs an' barley rigs,	
An' corn rigs are bonie :	
I'll ne'er forget that happy night,	
Amang the rigs wi' Annie.	

The sky was blue, the wind was still,
 The moon was shining clearly ;
 I set her down, wi' right good will,
 Amang the rigs o' barley :

The Rigs o' Barley.

"I SET HER DOWN WI RIGHT GUID WILL
AMANG THE RIGS O' BARLEY."





I *ken't* her heart was a' my ain ; knew
 I lov'd her most sincerely ;
 I kiss'd her *owre* and *owre* again, over
 Among the rigs o' barley.
 Corn rigs, an' barley rigs, &c.

I lock'd her in my fond embrace ;
 Her heart was beating rarely :
 My blessings on that happy place,
 Among the rigs o' barley !
 But by the moon and stars so bright,
 That shone that hour so clearly !
 She ay shall bless that happy night
 Among the rigs o' barley.
 Corn rigs, an' barley rigs, &c.

I hae been *blythe* wi' comrades dear ; glad
 I hae been merry drinking ;
 I hae been joyfu' gath'rin *gear* ; money
 I hae been happy thinking :
 But a' the pleasures e'er I saw,
 Tho' three times doubl'd fairly—
 That happy night was worth them a',
 Among the rigs o' barley.
 Corn rigs, an' barley rigs, &c.

[We conceive that we cannot be far wrong in setting down this and the four songs which immediately follow as compositions of the period from the summer of 1782 to the close of 1783, when the Burness family was preparing to remove to Mossgiel, and old William Burness, was about to bid them all farewell for ever. Many of the "Annies" of the district have contended for the dubious honor of being the heroine of this warmly-colored, yet highly popular, lyric. The name of Anne Ronald has been mentioned; but, as we have already seen, the poet was content to admire her at a respectful distance. Anne Rankine, daughter of a farmer at Adamhill, within two miles west of Lochlea, and who afterwards became Mrs. Merry, not only "owned the soft impeachment," but to her dying day boasted that she was the Annie of the "Rigs o' Barley." If so, then Gilbert was right when he

told Dr. Currie that "there was often a great disparity between the fair captivator and her attributes" as depicted in song by her lover.

Our poet is said to have, on more than one occasion in after-life, referred to the closing verse of this song as one of his happiest strokes of workmanship.]

SONG—"COMPOSED IN AUGUST."

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
 Bring Autumn's pleasant weather;
 The moorcock springs on whirring wings,
 Among the blooming heather:
 Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
 Delights the weary farmer;
 And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night,
 To muse upon my charmer.

The partridge loves the fruitful <i>fells</i> ,	uplands
The plover loves the mountains;	
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells,	
The soaring <i>hern</i> the fountains:	heron
Thro' lofty groves the <i>cushat</i> roves,	wood-pigeon
The path of man to shun it;	
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,	
The spreading thorn the linnet.	

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
 The savage and the tender;
 Some social join, and leagues combine,
 Some solitary wander:
 Avaunt, away, the cruel sway!
 Tyrannic man's dominion;
 The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
 The flutt'ring, gory pinion!

But, Peggy dear, the ev'ning's clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow;
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow:
Come let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of Nature;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And ev'ry happy creature.

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
Till the silent moon shine clearly;
I'll grasp thy waist, and, fondly press't,
Swear how I love thee dearly:
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not Autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer!

[This is "Song Second" (of the author's Edinburgh edition), referred to in his autobiography as "the ebullition of that passion which ended that school business" at Kirkoswald. If the lyric was suggested and partly sketched out when the poet was but in his seventeenth year, we are assured, on the testimony of Mrs. Begg, that at a considerably later period he experienced another love-fit for Kirkoswald Peggy, and corresponded with her, with a view to matrimony. It would be then that he dressed up this finely descriptive composition into its existing form; but as he soon thereafter fell into grief about the subject of his epistle to Rankine, he was forced to abandon the idea of matrimony with Peggy.]

We shall again have occasion to advert to this very early inspirer of the poet's passion, when, under date 1786, we give the verses he inscribed on a presentation copy to her of his first edition. Among the bard's letters also will be given one addressed by him to an early Carrick friend, Mr. Thomas Orr, Park, dated 11th Nov., 1784, which throws some light on the present subject.]

My Nannie O'

"I'M WELCOME AY TO NANNIE O"



My riches a's my penny-fee,*
 An' I *maun* guide it *cannie*, O ; must carefully
 But *warl's gear* ne'er troubles me, world's wealth
 My thoughts are a'—my Nannie, O.

Our *auld* guidman delights to view old
 His sheep an' *kye* thrive bonie O ; cows
 But I'm as blythe that *hauds* his *pleugh*, holds plough
 An' has nae care but Nannie, O.

Come weel, come woe, I *care na* by ; care not
 I'll tak what Heav'n will sen' me, O :
 No other care in life have I,
 But live, an' love my Nannie, O.

[The author, in his Common-place Book, directs this song to be sung to the tune of "As I came in by London, O," which no doubt would be the opening line of some then popular, but now unknown English song, set to the old Scotch air, "My Nanie, O."

A vast deal has been written and said concerning the heroineship of this song. The Rev. Hamilton Paul, who belonged to Ayrshire, and was almost a contemporary of Burns, thus wrote in 1819 :—"In Kilmarnock, Burns first saw 'Nanie,' the subject of one of his most popular ballads. She captivated him as well by the charm of her person as by the melody of her voice. As he devoted much of his spare time to her society, and listened to her singing with the most religious attention, her sister observed to him, that he paid more attention to Nanie's singing than he would do to a preaching; he retorted with an oath—'Madam, there's no comparison.'" On the other hand, Gilbert Burns, who was aware that the song was composed before his brother ever spent an hour in Kilmarnock, informed George Thomson, that "Nanie was a farmer's daughter in Tarbolton parish, named Fleming, to whom the poet paid some of that roving attention which he was continually devoting to some one. Her charms were indeed mediocre, and what she had were sexual, which indeed was the characteristic of the greater part of his mistresses. He was no Platonic lover, whatever he might pretend or suppose of himself."

* My small wages are all my wealth.—J. H.

Allan Cunningham and other annotators have, through a misconception of the opening lines of the song, run away with the notion that Nanie belonged to Carrick, like the subject of the preceding lyric. But when we have the poet himself confessing that *Vive l'amour, et vive la bagatelle* were his "sole principles of action," and that when the labors of each day were over, he "spent the evening in the way after his own heart," we must conclude that his rural divinities were not far to seek. It is by no means requisite that the inspirer of this picture of rustic purity should have been named "Nanie." Here the poet sets himself to clothe with suitable words one of our most popular native melodies, and unless he had closed each verse with the familiar name—"My Nanie, O,"—nothing that he could have composed for it could have answered the purpose so well.

The early copy in the Common-place Book does not materially differ from that afterwards published; but at the end of verse first, and at the close of the song, he gives the following chorus:—

"And O my bonie Nanie, O,
My young, my handsome Nanie, O;
Tho' I had the world all at my will,
I would give it all for Nanie, O."

SONG—GREEN GROW THE RASHES.

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

Chor.—Green grow the rashes, O;
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses, O.

THERE'S nought but care on ev'ry han',
In every hour that passes, O:
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O. if it were not
Green grow, &c.

The *war'ly* race may riches chase, worldly
 An' riches still may fly them, O ;
 An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
 Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.
 Green grow, &c.

But gie me a *cannie* hour at e'en, quiet
 My arms about my dearie, O ;
 An' war'ly cares, an' war'ly men,
 May a' gae *tapsalteerie*, O. topsy-turvy
 Green grow, &c.

For you sae *douce*, ye sneer at this ; gravely prudent
 Ye're nought but senseless asses, O :
 The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
 He dearly lov'd the lasses, O.
 Green grow, &c.

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
 Her noblest work she classes, O :
 Her prentice han' she try'd on man,
 An' then she made the lasses, O.
 Green grow, &c.

[The author has nowhere given an indication of the date of this widely popular song. He entered it among other early pieces in his Common-place Book in August, 1784. It may have been then just composed ; but a Tarbolton contemporary spoke of it to Chambers, as a Lochlea production, in these terms :—"Burns composed a song on almost every tolerable-looking lass in the parish, and finally one in which he embraced them all." It is certain, however, that its crowning stanza—the last one—was not added till a much later date, perhaps not till he brushed up the song to appear in his Edinburgh volume of 1787. This is proved by the fact that in his early manuscript copies that verse is wanting.

The poet's son Robert, during the period of his retirement in Dumfries, used, in connection with this song, to repeat a stanza added by himself, which deserves preservation as a happy sequel to his father's idea in the closing verse. It is as follows :—

Frae man's ain side the form was made
 That a' God's wark surpasses, O ;
 Man only loes his ain heart's bluid,
 Wha dearly loves the lasses, O."

In all the author's printed copies, except in the *Museum*, the word *spend*, in line third of the chorus, is altered to *spent* to the detriment of the poet's grammar. We therefore adhere to the *Museum* copy in that particular, which corresponds with the MS. of the Common-place Book.]

SONG—"INDEED WILL I," QUO' FINDLAY.

Tune—"Lass, an I come near thee."

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1792.)

- "*Wha* is that at my bower-door?" who
 'O *wha* is it but Findlay !'
 "Then *gae your gate*, ye 'se nae be here:" go your }
ways }
 'Indeed *maun I*,' quo' Findlay, must I
 "What *make ye*, sae like a thief?" do you
 'O come and see,' quo' Findlay ;
 "Before the morn ye'll work mischief"—
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.
- "*Gif* I rise and let you in"— if
 'Let me in,' quo' Findlay,
 "Ye'll keep me *waukin wi' your din*"—awake noise
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay,
 "In my bower if ye should stay"—
 'Let me stay,' quo' Findlay ;
 "I fear ye'll *bide* till break o' day"— remain
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.
- "Here this night if ye remain"—
 'I'll remain,' quo' Findlay ;
 "I dread ye'll learn the *gate* again"— way
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.
 "What may pass within this bower"—
 'Let it pass,' quo' Findlay ;
 "Ye *maun* conceal till your last hour"— must
 'Indeed will I,' quo' Findlay.

[We consider ourselves justifiable in recording this as a production of the Lochlea period of the author's life. Gilbert Burns assured Cromek that his brother composed it in emulation of a piece in Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany*, called "The auld man's best argument." An old woman in Tarbolton, named Jean Wilson, used to divert him and his companions by singing it with great effect; and Gilbert supposed the poet had not then seen Ramsay's song.]

James Findlay, an Officer of Excise in Tarbolton, who afterwards married one of the "belles of Mauchline," was appointed, in March, 1788, to train Burns for the duties of an exciseman. It is by no means improbable that this same Mr. Findlay, or a relative of his, was the hero of the foregoing song.]

REMORSE: A FRAGMENT.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

OF all the numerous ills that hurt our peace—
That press the soul, or wring the mind with anguish,
Beyond comparison the worst are those
By our own folly, or our guilt brought on:
In ev'ry other circumstance, the mind
Has this to say, 'It was no deed of mine:'
But, when to all the evil of misfortune
This sting is added, 'blame thy foolish self!'
Or worser far, the pangs of keen remorse,
The torturing, gnawing consciousness of guilt—
Of guilt, perhaps, where we've involvèd others,
The young, the innocent, who fondly lov'd us;
Nay more, that very love their cause of ruin!
O burning hell! in all thy store of torments
There's not a keener lash!
Lives there a man so firm, who, while his heart
Feels all the bitter horrors of his crime,
Can reason down its agonizing throbs;
And, after proper purpose of amendment,
Can firmly force his jarring thoughts to peace?
O happy, happy, enviable man!
O glorious magnanimity of soul!

[These lines (reminding one of the "Fragment of a Tragedy," at p. 10) are recorded, under date September, 1783, in the poet's first Common-place Book. It is most probable that the poem is set down at its proper date, prompted by keen self-reproaches produced through the effects of immoral indulgence. In his observations which introduce the piece, he seems to take credit to himself for bearing up against his wretchedness with manly firmness, because tempered with a penitential sense of his own misconduct. This spirit he terms "a glorious effort of self-command."]

EPITAPH ON JAMES GRIEVE, *LAIRD* OF BOG-
HEAD, TARBOLTON. proprietor

(ORIG. COMMON-PLACE BOOK, 1784.)

HERE lies Boghead among the dead,
In hopes to get salvation;
But if such as he, in Heav'n may be,
Then welcome—hail! damnation.

[This is the earliest sample of an extensive crop of like facetiæ which the author, to the close of his life, was fond of producing. It is not very complimentary to the poor laird who provoked it; yet, by adopting a very slight variation, the poet, in his *Kilmarnock* volume, converted this quatrain into a rich compliment to his friend, Gavin Hamilton, thus:—

"The poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blamed;
But with such as he, where'er he be,
May I be saved or damned!"

Boghead lies upwards of a mile due west from Lochlea, and near Adamhill. This epitaph does not accord very well with a gossiping anecdote given by Dr. Waddell conveying the allegation of frequent friendly visits paid by Burns to Boghead during this early period.]

EPITAPH ON WM. HOOD, SENR., IN TARBOLTON.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

HERE *Souter* Hood in death does sleep ; shoemaker
 To hell if he's *gane* thither, gone
 Satan, gie him thy *gear* to keep ; cash
 He'll *haud* it weel *thegether*. hold together

[The poet printed this with the title "ON A CELEBRATED RULING ELDER." Every annotator hitherto had held it to apply to one of the elders of Mauchline kirk who aided in the persecution of Gavin Hamilton. It now appears, however, that one of the Tarbolton elders had, at a much earlier period, also provoked the poet's hostility—not certainly by his hypocrisy, but by his extreme penuriousness. The epitaph is recorded in the Common-place Book, along with the following, under date April, 1784.]

EPITAPH ON MY OWN FRIEND AND MY FATHER'S FRIEND, WM. MUIR, IN TARBOLTON MILL.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

AN honest man here lies at rest,
 As e'er God with his image blest ;
 The friend of man, the friend of truth,
 The friend of age, and guide of youth :
 Few hearts like his—with virtue warm'd,
 Few heads with knowledge so informed :
 If there's another world, he lives in bliss ;
 If there is none, he made the best of this.

[We take the title of this from the original Common-place Book. Currie's heading is simply "Epitaph on a Friend." This has always been regarded as one of the finest of the poet's numerous compliments, paid in a posthumous form, to hale and hearty

friends. The subject of it was the tenant of "Willie's Mill" of Death and Dr. Hornbook, and a life-long friend of Burns and his relations. He died in 1793.

The opening line reads thus in the early MS.—

Here lies a cheerful, honest breast.]

EPITAPH ON MY EVER HONOURED FATHER.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

O YE whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
 Draw near with pious rev'rence, and attend !
 Here lie the loving husband's dear remains,
 The tender father, and the gen'rous friend ;
 The pitying heart that felt for human woe,
 The dauntless heart that fear'd no human pride ;
 The friend of man—to vice alone a foe ;
 For "ev'en his failings leaned to virtue's side."

[It is not likely (although not impossible) that this well-known Epitaph, like the preceding, was composed during the lifetime of the subject of it. We find it recorded on the same page, and under the same date (April, 1784), as that to William Muir in the original Common-place Book. Instead of the opening line, as in the text, he has there written—

"O ye who sympathize with virtue's pains;"

and apparently not satisfied with that, he suggests, at foot of the page—

"O ye whose hearts deceased merit pains."

The improvement effected in that line, as afterwards published, is very striking. The death of William Burnes happened at Lochlea, on 13th February, 1784. These lines of the son were engraved on the father's headstone in Alloway kirkyard; and the reader, in musing over it, is apt to revert to the memorable words of John Murdoch:—"O for a world of men of such dispositions! I have often wished, for the good of mankind, that it were as customary to honor and perpetuate the memory of those who excel in moral rectitude, as it is to extol what are called heroic actions. Then would the mausoleum of the friend of my youth overtop and surpass most of those we see in Westminster Abbey!"]

[The following picture of how the position of affairs during the Colonial struggle was viewed in Scotland, by liberals like Burns, has never been surpassed for graphic force and happy terseness of expression. We do not remember to have seen it heretofore alluded to; we presume the oversight is due to its being "chiefly in the Scottish dialect." Now that we have rendered it intelligible to American readers we believe it will be better appreciated.—J. H.]

BALLAD ON THE AMERICAN WAR.

Tune—"Killiecrankie."

(EDINBURGH ED., 1787.)

WHEN Guildford good our pilot stood,
 An' did our *hellim* *thraw*, man; helm twist
Ae night, at tea, began a plea, one
 Within America, man :
 Then up they gat the *maskin-pat*, tea-pot
 And in the sea did *jaw*, man; pour
 An' did nae less, in full congress,
 Than quite refuse our law, man.

Then thro' the lakes Montgomery* takes,
 I *wat* he was na *slaw*, man; wot slow
 Down Lowrie's Burn† he took a turn,
 And Carleton did ca', man :
 But yet, *whatreck*, he, at Quebec, of what avail
 Montgomery-like‡ did *fa'*, man, fall
 Wi' sword in hand, before his band,
 Amang his en'mies *a'*, man. all

* General Richard Montgomery invaded Canada, autumn 1775, and took Montreal,—the British commander, Sir Guy Carleton, retiring before him. In an attack on Quebec he was less fortunate, being killed by a storm of grape-shot in leading on his men at Cape Diamond.

† Lowrie's Burn, a pseudonym for the St. Lawrence.

‡ A passing compliment to the Montgomeries of Coilsfield, the patrons of the poet.

Poor Tammy Gage within a cage
 Was kept at Boston-ha',* man;
 Till Willie Howe took o'er the *knowe* high ground
 For Philadelphia, † man;
 Wi' sword an' gun he thought a sin
Guid christian *bluid* to draw, man; good blood
 But at New-York, *wi'* knife an' fork, with
 Sir-Loin he hackèd sma',‡ man.

Burgoyne *gaed* up, like spur an' whip, went
 Till Fraser brave did *fa'*, man; fall
 Then lost his way, *ae* misty day, one
 In Saratoga *shaw*, man.§ forests
 Cornwallis fought as lang's he *dought*, was able
 An' did the buckskins claw,|| man;
 But Clinton's glaive frae rust to save,
 He hung it to the *wa'*, man. wall

Then Montague, an' Guildford too,
 Began to fear a *fa'*, man;
 And Sackville *dour*, wha stood the *stoure*, stubborn }
 The German chief** to *thraw*, man: dust }
 thwart

* General Gage, governor of Massachusetts, was cooped up in Boston by General Washington during the latter part of 1775 and early part of 1776. In consequence of his inefficiency, he was replaced in October of that year by General Howe.

† General Howe removed his army from New York to Philadelphia in the summer of 1777.

‡ Alluding to a *razzia* made by orders of Howe at Peekskill, March, 1777, when a large quantity of cattle belonging to the Americans was destroyed.

§ General Burgoyne surrendered his army to General Gates, at Saratoga, on the Hudson, October, 1776.

|| Alluding to the active operations of Lord Cornwallis in Virginia, in 1780, all of which ended, however, in his surrender of his army at Yorktown, October, 1781, while vainly hoping for reinforcements from General Clinton at New York.

** The German chief was Baron Steuben, a general of the Revolutionary Army. He was a native of Prussia, and adjutant-general in its army. Being in Paris in 1777, he was invited by St. Germain to go to America, and forthwith set out and joined Washington at Valley Forge. In 1780 he held a command in Virginia, and was on the staff of General Lafayette at the siege of Yorktown. Having spent his whole fortune on his men, Congress, in 1790, voted him an annuity of \$2,500, and a township of land in the State of New York.—J. H.

For Paddy Burke, * like ony Turk,
 Nae mercy had at a', man ;
 An' Charlie Fox threw *by* the box, aside
 An' *lows'd* his tinkler jaw, man. unloosed

Then Rockingham took up the game ;
 Till death did on him *ca'*, man ; call
 When Shelburne meek held up his cheek,
 Conform to gospel law, man :
 Saint Stephen's boys, wi' jarring noise,
 They did his measures *thraw*, man ; thwart
 For North an' Fox united stocks,
 An' bore him to the wa', man.†

Then clubs and hearts were Charlie's *cartes*, cards
 He swept the stakes awa', man,
 Till the diamond's ace, of Indian race,
 Led him a sair *faux pas*, man :‡
 The Saxon lads, wi' loud *placads*, plaudits
 On Chatham's boy § did *ca'*, man ;
 An' Scotland drew her pipe an' blew,
 "Up, Willie, *waur* them a', man !" || worst

Behind the throne then Granville's gone,
 A secret word or twa, man ;
 While *slee* Dundas arous'd the class sly
 Be-north the Roman wa', man :

*Edmund Burke advocated a policy of justice and conciliation towards America, which, had it been adopted, would have averted (at least for a time) the War of Independence.—J. H.

†Lord North's administration was succeeded by that of the Marquis of Rockingham, March, 1782. At the death of the latter in the succeeding July, Lord Shelburne became prime minister, and Mr. Fox resigned his secretaryship. Under his lordship, peace was restored, January, 1783. By the union of Lord North and Mr. Fox, Lord Shelburne was soon after forced to resign in favor of his rivals, the heads of the celebrated coalition.

‡Fox's famous India Bill, by which his ministry was brought to destruction December, 1783.

§ William Pitt, second son of the Earl of Chatham.—J. H.

| A popular Scottish song.

An' Chatham's *wraith*, in heav'nly *graith*, apparition }
harness }
 (Inspired *bardies* saw, man), poets
 Wi' kindling eyes, cry'd, "Willie, rise!
 Would I hae fear'd them a', man?"

But, word an' blow, North, Fox and Co.
Gowff'd Willie like a ba', man; batted
 Till Suthron raise, an *coost their claise* cast their }
clothes }
 Behind him in a raw, man :
 An' Caledon threw by the *drone*, bagpipe
 An' did her *whittle* draw, man; sword
 An' *swoor* fu' rude, thro' dirt an' bluid, swore
 To mak it guid in law, man.*

[With the exception of a very few expressions in the foregoing piece, it does not seem to have attracted popular attention. It was most likely a production of the spring of 1784, although not published in the author's first edition. He applied to the Earl of Glencairn and to Mr. Erskine, Dean of Faculty, for their opinion as to the policy of including it in his Edinburgh volume, and they seem to have approved of it. Dr. Blair very characteristically remarked, on reading the ballad, that "Burns' politics smell of the smithy." This may be true, but the politics of the smithy regarding these matters did ultimately prevail.]

REPLY TO AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY J. RAN- KINE

THAT A GIRL, IN HIS NEIGHBORHOOD WAS WITH CHILD TO THE
POET.

(STEWART, 1801.)

I AM a keeper of the law
 In some *sma'* points, altho' not *a'*; small all

*In the new parliament called by Mr. Pitt, after his accession to office in the spring of 1784, amidst the many new members brought in for his support, and that of the king's prerogative, there was an exceeding proportion from Scotland.

Some people tell me *gin* I *fa'*, if fall
Ae way or ither, one
 The breaking of *ae* point, tho' *sma'*,
 Breaks a' *thegither*.* together

I *hae* been in for't *ance* or twice, have once
 And *winna* say *o'er* far for thrice; will not too
 Yet never met wi' that surprise
 That broke my rest;
 But now a rumor's like to rise—
 A *whaup's* i' the nest!† ^{curlew or} _{screamer}}

[The girl Elizabeth Paton, referred to in Rankine's announcement, had been a servant at Lochlea about the period of the Poet's father's death, in Feb., 1784. Thereafter, when the Burnes family removed to Mossiel, the girl went to her own home at Largside, in Rankine's neighborhood. In the natural course of events, the poet had soon occasion to write his famous "Epistle" to the same correspondent, on the subject of the preceding verses. That production accordingly now follows as a proper sequel.]

EPISTLE TO JOHN RANKINE, FARMER, ADAM-HILL,

ENCLOSING SOME POEMS.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

O ROUGH, rude, ready-witted Rankine, ^{choice of good}
 The *wale o' cocks* for fun an' drinking! _{fellows}
 There's mony godly folks are thinking,
 Your dreams‡ and tricks
 Will send you Korah-like a-sinkin,
Straught to auld Nick's. straight‡

* James ii. 10.

† The girl is pregnant.

‡ A certain humorous dream of his was then making a noise in the countryside.—R. B.

Ye hae sae many cracks an' cants, *
 And in your wicked, *drucken vants*, drunken frolics
 Ye mak a devil o' the *saunts*, saints
 An' fill them *fou*; full
 And then their failings, flaws, an' wants,
 Are a' seen thro'.

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it!
 That holy robe, O *dinna* tear it! do not
 Spare't for their sakes, wha aften wear it—
 The lads in black;
 But your curst wit, when it comes near it,
 Rives't aff their back. tears it from

Think, wicked Sinner, wha ye're *skaithing*: harming
 It's just the 'Blue-gown' badge an' claiting†
 O' *saunts*; tak that, ye *lea'e* them naething } saints }
 To *ken* them by, know }
Frae ony unregenerate heathen, from
 Like you or I.

I've sent you here some rhymin ware,
A' that I bargained for, an' *mair*; all more
Sae, when ye hae an hour to spare, so
 I will expect,
 Yon sang‡ ye'll sen't, wi' *cannie* care, quiet
 And *no* neglect. not

Tho' faith, sma' heart *hae* I to sing! have
 My muse *dow* scarcely spread her wing; can

* You have so many stories and merry tales.—J. H.

† "Blue gowns" were an order of licensed beggars in Scotland, wearing a badge and a blue cloak or gown. They were called the king's bedesmen. The practice of appointing "blue gowns" was discontinued in 1833, and the last survivor died in 1863. The Scotch clergy wear black gowns as their "claiting."—J. H.

‡ A song he had promised the author.—R. B.

As soon's the *clockin-time* is by, hatching-time
 An' the *wee pouts* began to cry, pullets
 L—d, I'se hae sportin by an' by,
 For my *gowd* guinea; gold
 Tho' I should herd the buckskin *kye* cows
 For't, in Virginia!*

Trowth, they had *muckle* for to blame! In truth much
 'Twas neither broken wing nor limb,
 But twa-three draps about the *wame*, flank
 Scarce thro' the feathers;
 An' baith a "yellow George"† to claim
 An' *thole* their *blethers*! bear abuse

It *pits* me *ay* as mad's a hare; puts always
 So I can rhyme nor write nae mair;
 But pennyworths again is fair,
 When time's expedient:‡
 Meanwhile I am, respected Sir,
 Your most obedient.

[It would be interesting indeed to know what were the "poems" which the bard transmitted to Rankine along with this epistle, and even to learn what particular song he had craved from his jolly correspondent. Adamhill is in Craigie parish, although lying within two miles west of Lochlea, which was a much inferior farm. The special trick referred to in the second stanza was that of filling a sanctimonious professor miserably drunk, by entertaining him to a jorum of toddy at the farmhouse. The hot-water kettle had, by pre-arrangement, been primed with proof-whisky, so that the more water Rankine's guest added to his toddy for the purpose of diluting it, the more potent the liquor became.

*It was the custom to transport convicts to the "plantations" in Virginia. We have here, probably, the origin of the "poor whites" of that State.—J. H.

†A gold guinea, so-called from bearing the impress of one of the Georges, kings of England.—J. H.

‡The poet here intimates that he means to "get even" with the Session by taking value for his guinea so soon as opportunity offers.—J. H.

Less reprehensible instances of his waggery were his "humorous dreams," which the ready-witted farmer of Adamhill had conveniently at hand to relate whenever he desired to help the progress of his argument, or to administer a rebuke.]

[A SEQUEL TO THE TWO FOREGOING.]

A POET'S WELCOME TO HIS LOVE-BEGOTTEN DAUGHTER,

THE FIRST INSTANCE THAT ENTITLED HIM TO THE VENERABLE APPELLATION OF FATHER.

(STEWART, 1799, COMPARED WITH GLENRIDDELL MSS., 1874).

THOU'S welcome, wean ;	<i>mishanter</i>	fa' me,	ill-luck } befall }
If thoughts o' thee, or	<i>yet</i>	thy mamie,	of
Shall ever	<i>daunton</i>	me or awe me,	daunt
	My bonie lady,		
Or if I blush when thou shalt	<i>ca'</i>	me	call
	Tyta or daddie.		

Tho' now they	<i>ca'</i>	me fornicator,	
An' tease my name in	<i>kintry clatter</i> ,		country gossip
The	<i>mair</i>	they talk, I'm	<i>kent</i> the better, more, known
	E'en let them	<i>clash</i> ;	talk
An auld wife's tongue's a	<i>feckless</i>	matter	weak
	To gie ane	<i>fash</i> .	trouble

Welcome ! my bonie, sweet, wee	<i>dochter</i> ,	daughter
Tho' ye come here a	<i>wee</i>	unsought for, little bit
And tho' your comin' I hae fought for,		
	Baith kirk and	<i>queir</i> ; * choir
Yet, by my faith, <i>ye're</i>	<i>no</i>	unwrought for, you were not
	That I shall swear !	

* A name for the kirk-session (before which fornicators appeared), from its often holding its meetings in the choir.—J. H.

Wee image o' my bonie Betty,
 As fatherly I kiss and *daut* thee, fondle
 As dear, and near my heart I set thee,
 Wi' as gude will
 As *a'* the priests had seen me get thee all
 That's out o' h—ll.

Sweet fruit o' *mony* a merry dint, many
 My funny toil is now a' *tint*, lost
 Sin' thou cam to the warl' *asklent*, illegitimately
 Which fools may scoff at ;
 In my last *plack* thy part's be in't coin
 The better ha'f o't.

Tho' I should be the *waur bestead*, worse off for it
 Thou's be as *braw and bienly* clad, finely and comfortably
 And thy young years as nicely bred
 Wi' education,
 As ony brat o' wedlock's bed,
 In a' thy station.

Lord grant that thou may ay inherit
 Thy mither's person, grace, an' merit,
 An' thy poor, worthless daddy's spirit,
 Without his failins,
 'Twill please me mair to see thee heir it,
 Than *stocket mailens*. well-stocked farms

For if thou be what I wad *hae* thee, have
 And tak the counsel I shall *gie* thee, give
 I'll never rue my trouble wi' thee—
 The cost nor shame o't,
 But be a loving father to thee,
 And *brag* the name o't. boast

[The heading to the above poem is that in the Glenriddell volume preserved in Liverpool; but the copy entered there in Burns' autograph differs considerably from that first given to the world by Stewart. The verses are differently arranged, and the poem contains two hitherto unpublished stanzas, besides an entire remodelling of the verse which is last in the Glenriddell copy, and the fifth in Stewart. By some inadvertency, as we suppose, Burns, in transcribing the poem, had omitted Stewart's closing verse (the seventh in our text), which is so fine that it cannot be dispensed with. Through the kindness of Dr. Carruthers, of Inverness, we have been supplied with a copy of this poem which Burns presented to the aged Wm. Tytler, Esq., of Woodhouselee. It corresponds almost entirely with the Glenriddell version, and contains the stanza wanting there. That and other Burns' MSS., to be hereafter noticed, are in the possession of Mr. Tytler's great-grandson, Colonel Fraser-Tytler, of Aldourie.

The child—born in Nov., 1784—was tenderly reared and educated at Mossgiel under the care of the poet's mother and sisters. When "Betty Burns" arrived at the age of twenty-one years, she received £200 as a marriage-portion out of a fund that had been subscribed for the widow and children of the bard. She bore a striking resemblance to her father, and became the wife of Mr. John Bishop, overseer at Polkemmet, Linlithgowshire, and died in December, 1816, at the age of thirty-two. We have heard nothing of her offspring or her descendants.

The third and sixth stanzas are those that were brought to light in 1874 from the Glenriddell MSS.

The public is now in possession of the complete poem, with the author's last touches.]

SONG—O LEAVE NOVELS.

(CURRIE, 1801.)

O LEAVE novels,* ye Mauchline belles,
 Ye're safer at your spinning-wheel;
 Such witching books are baited hooks
 For rakish rooks like Rob Mossgiel;

* The Ayrshire pronunciation of *novel* is (or was) *no-vel'*, being, as is the case with many Scotch words, closer to the sound of the French original than the English pronunciation is.—J. H.

Your fine Tom Jones and Grandisons,
 They make your youthful fancies reel ;
 They heat your brains, and fire your veins,
 And then you're prey for Rob Mossgiel.

Beware a tongue that's smoothly hung,
 A heart that warmly seems to feel ;
 That feeling heart but acts a part—
 'Tis rakish art in Rob Mossgiel.
 The frank address, the soft caress,
 Are worse than poisoned darts of steel ;
 The frank address, and politesse,
 Are all finesse in Rob Mossgiel.

[This song contains excellent advice to the young women of Mauchline. It would have been well for at least one of those "belles" had she acted on the poet's candid warning; but, according to the philosophy of a reverend biographer of Burns, whose observations are commended by Lockhart—"To warn the young and unsuspecting of their danger, is only to stimulate their curiosity." The warning, in that case, were better withheld.]

FRAGMENT—THE MAUCHLINE LADY.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

WHEN first I came to Stewart Kyle,	
My mind it was <i>na</i> steady ;	not
Where'er I <i>gaed</i> , where'er I <i>rade</i> ,	went rode
A mistress still I had ay :	

But when I came roun' by Mauchline toun,
 Not dreading anybody,
 My heart was caught, before I thought,
 And by a Mauchline lady.

[If the *Epistle to Davie* was composed in January, 1785, then it follows that the poet's first rencontre with Jean Armour was in the summer of 1784. The present fragment, in that case, must apply

to her. It is a free parody of the old song, "I had a horse and I had nae mair," to which tune the author directs it to be set.

"Stewart Kyle," or Kyle-Stewart, is that part of the central district of Ayrshire which lies between the rivers Irvine and Ayr. The poet was originally of "King Kyle," or Kyle-Carrick—the district between the Ayr and the Doon. He shifted to Stewart Kyle on leaving Mount Oliphant for Lochlea, in 1777.]

FRAGMENT—MY GIRL SHE'S AIRY.

Tune—"Black Jock."

(ORIG. COMMON-PLACE BOOK, 1872.)

[See Introduction to Common-place Book.]

My girl she's airy, she's buxom and gay ;
 Her breath is as sweet as the blossoms in May ;
 A touch of her lips it ravishes quite :
 She's always good natur'd, good humor'd, and free ;
 She dances, she glances, she smiles upon me ;
 I never am happy when out of her sight.

Her slender neck, her handsome waist,
 Her hair well curled, her stays well lac'd,
 Her taper white leg with
 For her
 And O for the joys of a long winter night.

[The above fragment of a song the poet records in his Common-place Book, under date September, 1784. The editor of the printed copy of that curious MS. has noted that in the original there is some "defect," where the blanks are filled up with asterisks. Had the fragment been recorded a year later, we might safely assume that Jean Armour was the "airy girl" here sketched out.]

THE BELLES OF MAUCLINE.

(CURRIE, 1800.)

In Mauchline there dwells six proper young belles,
 The pride of the place and its neighborhood a' ;
 Their carriage and dress, a stranger would guess,
 In London or Paris, they'd gotten it a'.

EPITAPH ON A HENPECKED SQUIRE.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

As father Adam first was fool'd,
 (A case that's still too common,)
 Here lies a man a woman ruled
 The devil ruled the woman.

EPIGRAM ON THE SAID OCCASION.

O DEATH, had'st thou but spar'd his life,	
Whom we this day lament !	
We freely <i>wad</i> exchanged the wife,	would have
And <i>a'</i> been weel content.	all
Ev'n as he is, <i>could</i> in his <i>graff</i> ,	cold grave
The <i>swap</i> we yet will do't ;	exchange
Tak thou the carlin's carcass <i>aff</i> ,	off
<i>Thow'se</i> get the <i>saul o' boot</i> . You will	soul to boot

ANOTHER.

ONE Queen Artemisa, as old stories tell,
 When deprived of her husband she lovèd so well,
 In respect for the love and affection he show'd her,
 She reduced him to dust and she drank up the powder.
 But Queen Netherplace, of a diff'rent complexion,
 When called on to order the fun'ral direction,
 Would have eat her dead lord, on a slender pretence,
 Not to show her respect, but—to save the expence !

[The three foregoing epigrams were directed against Mr. Campbell, of Netherplace, and his wife, whose house and grounds the poet daily passed on his way between Mossgiel and Mauchline. After publication in his first edition they were withdrawn.]

ON TAM THE CHAPMAN.

(ALDINE ED., 1839.)

As Tam the chapman on a day,
 Wi' Death *forgather'd* by the way, met accidentally
 Weel pleas'd, he greets a wight so famous,
 And Death was *na* less pleas'd wi' Thomas, no
 Wha cheerfully lays down his pack,
 And there *blaws up* a hearty *crack*: begins chat
 His social, friendly, honest heart
Sae tickled Death, they could *na* part; so not
 Sae, after viewing knives and garters,
 Death taks him hame to *gie* him quarters. give

[This was first brought to life by William Cobbett, who printed it in his Magazine. It had been communicated to him by the subject of the epitaph, by name Thomas Kennedy, then an aged person resident in London. He represented himself as having known the poet in very early life, in the neighborhood of Ayr, where both were born and brought up. Kennedy afterwards became a travelling agent for a mercantile house in a country town near Mauchline, where he renewed acquaintance with Burns. These lines were composed on Kennedy's recovery from a severe illness.

This trifle may have suggested to Burns the idea afterwards worked out in "Death and Dr. Hornbook."]

EPITAPH ON JOHN RANKINE.

(STEWART, 1801.)

Æ day, as Death, that *gruesome carl*, grim fellow
 Was driving to the *tither* warl' the other
 A *mixtie-maxtie* motley squad, much mixed
 And mony a guilt-bespotted lad—
 Black gowns of each denomination,
 And thieves of every rank and station,

From him that wears the star and garter,
 To him that *wintles* in a halter : wriggles
 Ashamed himself to see the wretches,
 He mutters, *glowrin* at the bitches, staring
 "By G—d I'll not be seen behint them,
 Nor 'mang the sp'ritual *core* present them, corps or }
company }
 Without, at least, *ae* honest man, one
 To grace this d——d infernal clan !"
 By Adamhill* a glance he threw,
 "L—d God !" quoth he, "I have it now ;
 There's just the man I want, i' faith !"
 And quickly stoppit Rankine's breath.

[This is another in the same vein as the preceding. Cromek has observed that the first idea of the lines seems to have been suggested by Falstaff's account of his ragged recruits :—"I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat !" The piece would be as much to Rankine's taste as a similar compliment, some few years thereafter, was relished by Capt. Grose.]

LINES ON THE AUTHOR'S DEATH,

WRITTEN WITH THE SUPPOSED VIEW OF BEING HANDED
 TO RANKINE AFTER THE POET'S INTERMENT.

(STEWART, 1801.)

HE who of Rankine sang, lies stiff and dead,
 And a green grassy hillock hides his head ;
 Alas ! alas ! a devilish change indeed.

[These lines must be regarded as a counterpart to the poet's elegy on himself, composed shortly afterwards, beginning,—

"Now Robin lies in his last lair,
 He'll gabble rhyme and sing nae mair."]

* The residence of his friend, John Rankine, to whom he addresses a famous "Epistle."—See p. 5.—J. H.

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN: A DIRGE.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

WHEN chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One ev'ning, as I wander'd forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spied a man, whose aged step
Seem'd weary, worn with care ;
His face was furrow'd o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

“ Young stranger, whither wand'rest thou ? ”
Began the rev'rend sage ;

“ Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage ?
Or haply, prest with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth, with me to mourn
The miseries of man.

“ The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labor to support
A haughty lordling's pride ;—
I've seen yon weary winter-sun
Twice forty times return ;
And ev'ry time has added proofs,
That man was made to mourn.

“ O man ! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time !
Mis-spending all thy precious hours—
Thy glorious, youthful prime !

Alternate follies take the sway ;
Licentious passions burn ;
Which tenfold force gives Nature's law,
That man was made to mourn.

“ Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might ;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right :
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn ;
Then Age and Want—oh ! ill-match'd pair—
Shew man was made to mourn.

“ A few seem favorites of fate,
In pleasure's lap carest ;
Yet think not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly blest :
But oh ! what crowds in ev'ry land,
All wretched and forlorn,
Thro' weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn !

“ Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame !
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame ;
And man, whose heav'n-erected face
The smiles of love adorn,—
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn !

“ See yonder poor, o'erlabor'd wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil ;

And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, tho' a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

“ If I'm design'd yon lordling's slave—
By Nature's law design'd—
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn?
Or why has man the will and pow'r
To make his fellow mourn?

“ Yet, let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast :
This partial view of human-kind
Is surely not the last !
The poor, oppressèd, honest man
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn !

“ O Death ! the poor man's dearest friend,
The kindest and the best !
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest !
The great, the wealthy fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn ;
But, oh ! a blest relief for those
That weary-laden mourn !”

[This solemn composition has “chill November” in its introductory line, but the author's record of it in the Common-place Book is dated “August.” That document comes to a sudden close in October, 1785, so that we are forced to regard this as a composition of November, 1784. He there styles it “A SONG,” to

the tune of "Peggy Bawn." The present generation knows somewhat of a modern song and tune called "Molly Bawn," but few alive ever heard of the air thus referred to, whose querulous notes lent their impulse to the mind of Burns, while he composed those stanzas. A lovely spot called "Haugh," a mile or more below Mauchline, near where the *Lugar* flows into the river Ayr, is pointed out as the locality indicated by the poet in his opening verse. In one of his letters to Mrs. Dunlop, Burns writes:—"I had an old grand-uncle with whom my mother lived in her girlish years; the good old man was long blind ere he died, during which time his highest enjoyment was to sit down and cry, while my mother would sing the simple old song, 'The Life and Age of Man.'" In Southey's *Doctor* we find him thus referring to the present poem, and its connection with the above pathetic incident:—"It is certain that this old song was in Burns' mind when he composed to the same cadence those well-known stanzas of which the burthen is 'Man was made to mourn.' But the old blind man's tears were tears of piety, not of regret; while he thus listened and wept, his heart was not so much in the past as his hopes were in the future. Burns must have been conscious in his better hours (and he had many such) that he inherited the feeling—if not the sober piety—which is so touchingly exemplified in this family anecdote."]

THE TWA HERDS; OR, THE HOLY TULYIE.

AN UNCO MOURNFU' TALE.

pastors quarrel
a very

(STEWART AND MEIKLE'S TRACTS, 1799.)

"Blockheads with reason, wicked wits abhor,
But fool with fool is barbarous civil war."—POPE.

O a' ye pious godly flocks,
Weel fed on pastures orthodox,
Wha now will keep you *frae* the fox, from
Or worrying *tykes*? dogs
Or wha will *tent* the *waifs* an' *crocks*, guard stragglers }
About the *dykes*? fences oldewes }

The twa best herds in a' the *wast*, west (Ayrshire)
That e'er *ga'e* gospel horn a blast gave

L

F

These five an' twenty simmers past—

Oh, *dool* to tell !

sorrow

Hae had a bitter black *out-cast*

quarrel

Atween themsel.

between

O, Moodie, man, an' *wordy* Russell,

worthy

How could you raise so vile a bustle ;

Ye'll see how "new-light" herds* will whistle,

An' think it fine !

The L—'s cause ne'er gat sic a twist,

Sin' I *hae min'*.

remember

O, sirs ! whae'er wad hae expectit

Your duty ye wad sae neglectit,

Ye wha were ne'er by lairds respectit

To wear the plaid ;

But by the brutes themselves electit,

To be their guide.†

What flock wi' Moodie's flock could rank,

Sae hale and hearty every shank,

Nae poison'd *soor* Arminian *stank*

sour pool

He let them taste ;

Frae Calvin's well, ay clear they drank,—

O, sic a feast !

The thummart, willcat, brock, an' tod‡

Weel kend his voice thro' a' the wood,

well knew

He smell'd their *ilka* hole an' road,

each and every

Baith out and in ;

both

An' weel he lik'd to shed their bluid,

An' sell their skin.

* The new-light herds "were the moderate," *i. e.* less or more Arminian or rationalistic section of the clergy of the Scottish church ; the "auld light" constituted the Evangelical or strongly Calvinistic party. The distinction continues yet under the names Moderate and Evangelical.—J. H.

† Were not appointed by patrons, but chosen by the flock.—J. H.

‡ Polecat, wildcat, badger and fox. Thummart is a corruption of foumart or foul-martin, so called from its smell.—J. H.

What herd like Russell tell'd his tale ;
 His voice was heard thro' muir and dale,*
 He kenn'd the L—'s sheep, *ilka* tail, every
 Owre a' the height ;
 An' saw *gin* they were sick or hale, whether
 At the first sight.

He *fine* a mangy sheep could scrub, well
 Or nobly *fling* the gospel club, swing
 And "new-light" herds could nicely drub,
 Or pay their skin ;
 Could shake them o'er the burning *dub*, hole
 Or heave them in.

Sic twa—O ! do I live to see't, Such two
 Sic famous twa should disagree't,
 And names, like "villain," "hypocrite,"
 Ilk iither g'ven, Each other given
 While "new-light" herds, wi' laughin spite,
 Say *neither's lien* ! neither lies

A' ye wha *tent* the gospel *fauld*, guard fold
 There's Duncan† deep, an' Peebles‡ *shaul'*, shallow
 But chiefly thou, apostle Auld, §
 We trust in thee,
 That thou wilt work them, hot an' *cauld*, cold
 Till they agree.

Consider, sirs, how we're beset ;
 There's scarce a new herd that we get,
 But comes *frae* 'mang that cursed set from
 I *winna* name ; will not
 I hope *frae* heav'n to see them yet
 In fiery flame.

* Russell's voice could be heard a mile off.

† Rev. Dr. Duncan, of Dundonald.

‡ Rev. Wm. Peebles, Newton-on-Ayr.

§ Rev. Wm. Auld, of Mauchline.

An' that *fell* cur ca'd "common-sense," * keen
 That bites *sae sair*, so sore
 Be banish'd o'er the sea to France :
 Let him bark there.†

Then Shaw's an' D'rymple's eloquence,
 M'Gill's close nervous excellence,
 M'Quhae's pathetic manly sense,
 An' guid M'Math,
 Wi' Smith, *wha* thro' the heart can glance,‡ who
 May a' pack *aff*. off

[The author, in alluding to this poem in his autobiography, gives it no title such as that by which it is now distinguished. He calls it "a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two reverend Calvinists," and tells us that it was the first of his poetic offspring that saw the light. He does not mean the "light of print," but of circulation in manuscript. In our heading we give three titles, taken respectively from various printed copies; for we are not aware that any holograph copy exists except the one in the British Museum, which calls it "The Holy Tulyie."

In regard to its date, we suspect that Chambers, in placing it under April, 1785, has no authority beyond a fancied connection between this poem and the epistle to Wm. Simson, of May 1785. The reader has been already prepared, by the author's outburst against clerical hypocrisy in the Epistle to Rankine, to find him writing shortly thereafter in the same vein. Lockhart tells us—as from personal knowledge—that Burns personally witnessed in open court the unseemly contention between the "two herds,"—to wit, the Rev. John Russell of Kilmarnock, and the Rev. Alex. Moodie, of Riccarton. If so, the ecclesiastical court records may throw light upon the date. Meanwhile, we assume that the affair happened prior to the close of 1784.]

* "Common-sense" was, and is, claimed as the attribute of the "new-light" or rationalistic party.

† The poem ends here in the MS.

‡ In the Tract, 1799, this line reads,—"*Wha* through the heart can brawly glance," and thus the compliment to Smith is dispensed with, and turned in favor of M'Math.

The last o't, the *warst* o't, worst of it
Is only but to beg.*

To lye in kilns and barns at e'en,
When *banes* are craz'd, and *bluid* is thin, bones blood
Is, doubtless, great distress !
Yet then content could make us blest ;
Ev'n then, sometimes, we'd snatch a taste
Of truest happiness.

The honest heart that's free *frae a'* from all
Intended fraud or guile,
However Fortune kick the *ba'*, ball
Has ay some cause to smile ;
An' mind still, you'll find still,
A comfort this nae *sma'* ; small
Nae mair then, we'll care then,
Nae farther we can fa'. we cannot fall lower

What tho', like commoners of air,
We wander out, we know not where,
But either house or hal', without
Yet nature's charms, the hills and woods,
The sweeping vales, an' foaming floods,
Are free alike to all.
In days when daisies deck the ground,
And blackbirds whistle clear,
With honest joy our hearts will bound,
To see the coming year :
On *braes* when we please then, heights
We'll sit an' *sowth* a tune ; whistle softly
Syne rhyme *till't*, we'll time till't, afterwards }
An' sing't when we hae done. to it }

* In Burns' time there were no poor-laws in Scotland, and the only resource that old or disabled destitute persons had was beggary. As poor people in general did not know but that they might come to this themselves, beggars were much more considerately and familiarly treated than they are now. They were regarded simply as beaten in the struggle with the world, not as disgraced.—J. H.

It's no in titles nor in rank ;
 It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
 To purchase peace and rest :
 It's no in makin *muckle, mair* ; much into more
 It's no in books, it's no in *lear*, learning
 To make us truly blest :
 If happiness hae not her seat
 An' centre in the breast,
 We may be wise, or rich, or great,
 But never can be blest ;
 Nae treasures nor pleasures
 Could make us happy lang ;
 The heart ay's the part ay
 That makes us right or wrang.

Think ye, that *sic* as you and I, such
 Wha drudge an' drive thro' wet and dry,
 Wi' never ceasing toil ;
 Think ye, are we less blest than they,
 Wha scarcely *tent* us in their way, notice
 As hardly worth their while ?
 Alas ! how oft in haughty mood,
 God's creatures they oppress !
 Or else, neglecting a' that's good,
 They riot in excess !
 Baith careless and fearless
 Of either heaven or hell ;
 Esteeming, and deeming
 It *a'* an idle tale ! all

Then let us cheerfu' acquiesce,
 Nor make our scanty pleasures less,
 By pining at our state :
 And, even should misfortunes come,
 I, here wha sit, *hae* met wi' some— have
 An's thankfu' for them yet, and am

They *gie* the wit of age to youth ; give
 They let us *ken oursel* ; know ourselves
 They make us see the naked truth—
 The real *guid* and ill : good
 Tho' losses an' crosses
 Be lessons right severe,
 There's wit there, ye'll get there,
 Ye'll find nae other where.

But *tent me*, Davie, ace o' hearts ! attend to me
 (To say aught less wad wrang the *cartes*, cards
 And flatt'ry I detest)
 This life has joys for you and I ;
 An' joys that riches ne'er could buy,
 An' joys the very best.
 There's a' the pleasures o' the heart,
 The lover an' the frien' ;
 Ye hae your Meg, your dearest part,
 And I my darling Jean !
 It warms me, it charms me,
 To mention but her name :
 It heats me, it *beets* me, enkindles
 An' sets me a' on flame !

O all ye Pow'rs who rule above !
 O Thou whose very self art love !
 Thou know'st my words sincere !
 The life-blood streaming thro' my heart,
 Or my more dear immortal part,
 Is not more fondly dear !
 When heart-corroding care and grief
 Deprive my soul of rest,
 Her dear idea brings relief,
 And solace to my breast.
 Thou Being, All-seeing,
 O hear my fervent pray'r ;
 Still take her, and make her
 Thy most peculiar care !

he applied himself earnestly to business, first as a grocer, and thereafter as a schoolmaster. Eventually he became a councillor, and latterly a magistrate, of Irvine, and survived till 1830, much respected, and possessed of considerable means.

The poem exhibits Burns in the full blossom of attachment to his Jean. It was not the fate of Sillar to obtain the hand of his "Meg" referred to in the Epistle: she was *Margaret Orr*, a servant at Stair House.]

HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER.

"And send the godly in a pet to pray."—POPE.

(STEWART AND MEIKLE'S TRACTS, 1799.)

ARGUMENT.—Holy Willie was a rather oldish bachelor elder, in the parish of Mauchline, and much and justly famed for that polemical chattering which ends in tipling orthodoxy, and for that spiritualized bawdry which refines to liquorish devotion. In a sessional process with a gentleman in Mauchline—a Mr. Gavin Hamilton—*Holy Willie* and his priest, Father Auld, after full hearing in the presbytery of Ayr, came off but second best, owing partly to the oratorical powers of Mr. Robert Aiken, Mr. Hamilton's counsel; but chiefly to Mr. Hamilton's being one of the most irreproachable and truly respectable characters in the county. On losing his process, the muse overheard him [*Holy Willie*] at his devotions, as follows:—

O THOU, who in the heavens does dwell,
 Who, as it pleases best Thyself,
 Sends ane to heaven an' ten to hell,
 A' for Thy glory,
 And no for *ony* gude or ill
 They've done *afore Thee!* * any
in thy }
sight }

* It is amusing and instructive to note how differently the respective biographers of the poet have expressed their sentiments regarding this powerful production. The Rev. Hamilton Paul and the Rev. Hatley Waddell seem to invite the friends of religion to bless the memory of the poet who took such a judicious method of "leading the liberal mind to a rational view of the nature of

I bless and praise Thy matchless might,
 When thousands Thou hast left in night,
 That I am here *afore* Thy sight, before
 For gifts an' grace
 A burning and a shining light
 To a' this place.

What was I, or my generation,
 That I should get *sic* exaltation, such
 I *wha* deserve most just damnation who
 For broken laws,
 Five thousand years ere my creation,
 Thro' Adam's cause.

When *frae* my mither's womb I fell, from
 Thou might hae plungèd me in hell,
 To gnash my gums, to weep and wail,
 In burnin lakes,
 Where damnèd devils roar and yell,
 Chain'd to their stakes.

Yet I am here a chosen sample,
 To show Thy grace is great and ample ;

prayer." Dr. Waddell says that the poem "implies no irreverence whatever on the writer's part; but on the contrary, manifests his own profoundest detestation of, and contempt for, every variety of imposture in the name of religion." His brother divine regards the poem as "merely a metrical version of every prayer that is offered up by those who call themselves of the pure reformed church of Scotland." Motherwell, on the other hand, styles it "by far the most reprehensible of Burns' pieces, and one which should never have been written." Cunningham timidly shelters himself behind the words of Sir Walter Scott, by calling it a "too daring poem," and "a piece of satire more exquisitely severe than any which Burns ever afterwards wrote." Chambers describes it as "a satire nominally aimed at *Holy Willie* , but in reality a burlesque of the extreme doctrinal views of the party to which that hypocrite belonged." Many will agree with Sir Harris Nicolas in saying that "the reverend admirers of the poem appear to have compounded with their consciences for being pleased with a piece showing little veneration for religion itself, because it ridicules the mistaken zeal of an opposite sect."

(However regarded by Burns' biographers, this is one of the best known and most frequently quoted of his poems.—J. H.)

I'm here a pillar o' Thy temple,
Strong as a rock,
A guide, a buckler, and example,
To a' thy flock.

O L—d, Thou *kens* what zeal I bear, knowest
When drinkers drink, an' swearers swear,
An' singin' there, an' dancin' here,
 Wi' great and sma';
For I am keepit by Thy fear
 Free *frae* them a'. from

But yet, O Lord ! confess I must,
At times I'm *fash'd* wi' fleshly lust : troubled
An' sometimes, too, in *worldly* trust, worldly
 Vile self gets in ;
But Thou remembers we are dust,
 Defil'd wi' sin.

O L—d ! *yestreen*, Thou kens, wi' Meg—*yester-even*
Thy pardon I sincerely beg,
O ! may't ne'er be a livin plague
 To my dishonor,
An' I'll ne'er lift a lawless leg
 Again upon her.

Besides, I farther *maun* allow, must
 Wi' Leezie's lass, three times I trow—
 But L—d, that Friday I was *fou*, full
When I came near her ;
 Or else, 'Thou kens, 'Thy servant true
Wad never *steer* her. disturb

Maybe Thou lets this fleshly thorn perhaps
Buffet Thy servant e'en and morn,
Lest he *owre* proud and high shou'd turn, too
 That he's sae gifted :
If sae, 'Thy han' maun e'en be borne,
 Until Thou lift it.

L—d, bless Thy chosen in this place,
 For here Thou hast a chosen race :
 But G—d confound their stubborn face,
 An' blast their name,
 Wha bring Thy elders to disgrace
 An' public shame.

L—d, mind *Gaw'n* Hamilton's deserts : Gavin
 He drinks, an' swears, an' plays at *cards*, cards
 Yet has sae mony takin arts,
 Wi' great and sma',
 Frae G—d's ain priest the people's hearts
 He steals awa.

An' when we chasten'd him therefor, outburst of }
 Thou kens how he bred sic a *splore*, ridicule }
 As set the warld in a roar
 O' laughing at us ;—
 Curse Thou his basket and his store,
 Kail an' potatoes.

L—d, hear my earnest cry and pray'r,
 Against that Presbyt'ry o' Ayr ;
 Thy strong right hand, L—d, make it bare
 Upo' their heads ;
 L—d visit them, an' dinna spare,
 For their misdeeds.

O L—d, my G—d ! that glib-tongu'd Aiken,*
 My vera heart and flesh are quakin,
 To think how we stood sweatin, shakin,
 An' p—'d wi' dread, sneering }
 While he, wi' hingin lip an' *snakin*, exultingly }
 Held up his head.

*An eloquent Ayr lawyer, who argued his brother practitioner's (Hamilton's) case before the Presbytery. SEE ARGUMENT.—J. H.

L—d, in Thy day o' vengeance try him,
 L—d, visit them wha did employ him,
 And pass not in Thy mercy by them,
 Nor hear their pray'r,
 But for Thy people's sake destroy them,
 An' *dinna* spare.

do not

But, L—d, remember me an' mine
 Wi' mercies temporal an' divine,
 That I for grace an' *gear* may shine, wealth
 Excell'd by *nane*, none
 And a' The glory shall be thine,
 Amen, Amen!

[The "Argument," or introduction, printed at the head of this poem, is from the bard's own pen. It is prefixed to the copy inserted in the Glenriddell volume at Liverpool. This enables us with some certainty to decide that the early part of the year 1785 was the date of the composition. The "sessional process" referred to really commenced in August, 1784, just before the annual celebration of the communion at Mauchline, when the name of Gavin Hamilton, friend and landlord of the poet, was included in a list of members who were threatened to be debarred from the communion table for "habitual neglect of church ordinances." Hamilton, believing that he himself was the party chiefly aimed at, addressed an angry letter to the kirk session, telling them that they had no just grounds of offence against him, and that they must be conscious of proceeding purely on "private pique and ill-nature." Hamilton, finding the kirk session obstinate, and inclined to treat him still more offensively, appealed to the presbytery of Ayr for protection, and in January, 1785, he obtained a decree of that court ordering the erasure of the session minutes complained of. It was at this stage—as we apprehend—that the muse of Burns "overheard *Holy Willie* at his devotions;" but that personage did not content himself with "prayers" merely, for Auld and his confederates refused to obey the presbyterial order, and made appeal to the Synod. The process there did not close till July, 1785, when the affair was compromised by Hamilton's acceptance of a certificate from his kirk session, granting him to be "free from all ground of church censure."

In the complete "Prayer" there are seventeen stanzas, the *sixth* of which is rarely found in the later manuscripts; perhaps

because Burns felt it to be rather a weak verse, and excluded it in transcribing. It is not in Stewart and Meikle's Tracts, 1799, nor in Stewart's volume, 1801; but it appears in his second edition, 1802. It is amusing to notice how the various editors have dealt with the text. The Rev. Hamilton Paul gives it pure and uncastrated, excluding only the *sixth* verse, of the existence of which he might not be aware. Cunningham omits verses *sixth* and *eighth*, and corrupts the *fifteenth*. Motherwell gives all the seventeen verses, but his *fifteenth* stanza is the "Dumfries version," of which we shall presently speak. Chambers omits the *sixth*, *eighth* and *ninth* verses, besides repeating Cunningham's corruption of verse *fifteenth*. The Glenriddell MS. adopts what we have termed the "Dumfries version" of the *fifteenth* stanza. The poet's friends in that county stumbled at the word "snakin," which, in the text, has a meaning the very opposite of the English word *sneaking*. To please them, he altered the structure and effect of the stanza, so that the word objected to has the ordinary meaning of the word "sneaking," but only pronounced as an Irishman might—"snakin'." The following is the altered stanza, and the reader may decide for himself whether it or the Ayrshire version is the better one:—

"O L—d, my G—d, that glib-tongued Aiken!
 My very heart and flesh are quaking,
 To think how I sat sweating, shaking,
 And p—ss'd wi' dread,
 While Auld, wi' hinging lip, gaed sneaking,
 And hid his head!"

The motto from Pope is found only in MS. of this poem made in Dumfries. The same observation applies to the motto prefixed to the *Twa Herds*.]

EPITAPH ON HOLY WILLIE.

(STEWART, 1801.)

HERE Holy Willie's <i>sair</i> worn clay	sore
Taks up its last abode;	
His <i>saul</i> has <i>ta'en</i> some other way,	soul taken
I fear, the left-hand road.	

Stop! there he is, as sure's a gun,
 Poor, silly body, see him;
 Nae wonder he's as black's the *grun*, ground
 Observe wha's standing wi' him.

Your *brunstane* devilship, I see, brimstone
 Has got him there before ye;
 But haud your nine-tail cat *a wee*, a little
 Till *ance* you've heard my story. once

Your pity I will not implore,
 For pity ye have nane;
 Justice, alas! has *gi'en* him o'er, given
 And mercy's day is *gane*. past

But hear me, Sir, deil as ye are,
 Look something to your credit;
 A *coof* like him *wad* stain your name, blockhead }
 If it were *kent* ye did it. would }
 known

[This "Epitaph" is a poor performance, compared with the main poem; and the author would seem to have been sensible of this when he refrained from transcribing it into the Glenriddell volume along with the "Prayer." It was not published till two years after the latter made its first appearance, and we are not aware that it now exists in the poet's autograph. The name of the hero of these biting satires was William Fisher, a leading elder in the parish church of Mauchline. Its kirk session, in 1785, consisted of three active members—Rev. William Auld, Mr. John Sillars, and "Holy Willie." In cases of discipline, the reverend incumbent, as moderator, first expressed his opinion, and foreshadowed judgment: William Fisher would obsequiously second the minister in the words, "I say wi' you, Mr. Auld—what say you, Mr. Sillars?" The latter might either agree or dissent, for it made no difference, he being a hopeless minority in a court like that. Such is the account of "Daddie Auld's" session given by Dr. Waddell, on the authority of local reminiscences gleaned by him in the district.

Burns, in a poem produced in 1789, refers to his ancient foe, William Fisher, in these words:—

"Holy Will, holy Will, there was wit in your skull,
 When ye pilfer'd the alms of the poor."

L

G

It appears that the sins of the hoary hypocrite rapidly found him out. The date of his death we have not ascertained, but his exit was quite in character; for he died in a ditch by the roadside, into which he had fallen on his way home from a debauch. Father Auld and he repose in Mauchline kirkyard, almost side by side, the inscription on the minister's tablet recording that he died on 12th December, 1791, in his 81st year.]

DEATH AND DOCTOR HORNBOOK,

A TRUE STORY.

(EDINBURGH EDITION, 1787.)

SOME books are lies <i>frae</i> end to end,	from
And some great lies were never penn'd :	
Ev'n ministers they hae been <i>kenn'd</i> ,	known
In holy rapture,	
A <i>rousing whid</i> at times to vend,	startling fib
And <i>nail't wi'</i> Scripture.	confirm it

But this that I am <i>gaun</i> to tell,	going
Which lately on a night befel,	
Is just as true's the Deil's in hell	
Or Dublin city :	
That e'er he nearer comes <i>oursel</i>	to ourselves
'S a <i>muckle</i> pity.	great

The <i>clachan yill</i> had made me <i>canty</i> ,	village-ale	happy
I was na <i>fou</i> , but just had plenty ;		full
I <i>stacher'd whyles</i> , but yet took <i>tent</i> ay	staggered occa-	}
To <i>free</i> the ditches ;	sionally care	
		avoid
An' hillocks, stanes, an' bushes, <i>kenn'd</i> ay		knew
<i>Frae ghaists</i> an' witches.		ghosts

The rising moon began to <i>glowre</i>	stare fixedly
The distant Cumnock hills <i>out-owre</i> :	over the top of

To count her horns,* wi' a' my pow'r,
 I set mysel;
 But whether she had three or four,
 I cou'd *na* tell. not

I was come round about the hill,
 An' *todlin* down on Willie's mill,† walking totteringly
 Setting my staff wi' a' my skill,
 To keep me *sicker*; steady and safe
 Tho' leeward *whyles*, against my will, now and then
 I *took a bicker*. made a lurch

I there wi' Something did *forgather*, encounter
 That pat me in an *erie swither*; dismal hesitancy
 An' awfu' scythe, out-owre ae *shouter*, shoulder
 Clear-dangling, hang;
 A three-tae'd *leister* on the ither salmon-spear
 Lay, large an' lang.

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa,
 The queerest shape that e'er I saw,
 For fient a *wame* it had *ava*; belly at all
 And then its shanks,
 They were as thin, as sharp an' sma'
 As cheeks o' *branks*.‡ wooden bridle

'*Guid-een*,' quo' I; 'Friend! hae ye been good-evening
 marwin, mowing
 'When ither folk are busy *sawin*!' § sowing

*Cumnock hills lie southeast from Tarbolton; and hence, it is argued by Dr. Waddell, the moon could not be seen in *crescent* from the poet's standpoint. The learned critic has forgot the "clachan yill."

†Willie's Mill, a mill near Tarbolton, on the river Faile, occupied by William Muir, a crony of Burns, and whose name appears as a subscriber to the Edinburgh edition of his poems.—J. H.

‡Waddell, on the authority of a local informant, says that *Death*, as well as *Hornbook*, had a local antitype—Hugh Reid, of the Lochlans, "a long ghaist-like body, wi' howe chafts and sma' shank-banes, whase deformities were weel seen for he wure short knee-breeks, thin stockings and muckle shoon." Burns "forgathered" with him that night "abune" Willie's Mill, and kent wha it was fu' brawly.—J. H.

§ This rencontre happened in seed-time, 1785.—R. B.

It seem'd to mak a kind o' *stan*,^{stand}
 But naething spak;
 At length, says I, 'Friend! whare ye *gaun*?^{going}
 'Will ye go back?

It spak right *howe*,—'My name is Death,^{hollow}
 'But be na' *fley'd*.'—Quoth I, 'Guid faith,^{alarmed}
 'Ye're may be come to stap my breath;
 'But *tent* me, *billie*;^{attend friend}
 'I *red* ye weel, tak care o' *skaith*,^{counsel harm}
 'See, there's a *gully*!^{clasp-knife}

'Gudeman,' quo' he, 'put up your *whittle*,^{knife}
 'I'm no design'd to try its mettle;
 'But if I did, I wad be *kittle*^{dangerously apt}
 'To be *mislear'd*;^{mischievous}
 'I wad na mind it, no that spittle
 Out-owre my beard.'^{* over}

'Weel, weel!' says I, 'a bargain be't;^{so }}
 'Come, gies your hand, an' *sae* we're *gree't*;^{agreed }}
 'We'll ease our shanks an' tak a seat—
 'Come, *gies* your news;^{give us}
 'This while ye hae been *mony a gate*,^{many a road}
 'At mony a house.'[†]

'Ay, ay!' quo' he, an' shook his head,
 'It's e'en a lang, lang time indeed
 'Sin' I began to *nick* the thread,^{cut}
 'An' choke the breath:
 'Folk *maun* do something for their bread,^{must}
 'An' *sae* maun Death.^{so}

* Burns here commits a solecism in giving the skeleton Death a beard, if we are to accept his words in their literal sense. The poet, however, really makes use of a common Scotch phrase expressive of supreme indifference or contempt, without thinking of its literal meaning.—J. H.

† An epidemical fever was then raging in that country.—R. B.

'Sax thousand years are near-hand fled six
 'Sin' I was to the *butching* bred, since butchering
 'An' mony a scheme in vain's been laid
 'To *stap* or *scar* me; stop scare
 'Till ane Hornbook's* ta'en up the trade,
 'And faith! he'll *waur* me. beat

'Ye ken Jock Hornbook i' the Clachan—
 'Deil *mak* his *kings-hood* in a put self-consequence
 spleuchan!— tobacco pouch
 'He's grown sae weel acquaint wi' Buchan †
 'And *ither chaps*, other fellows
 'The *weans haud* out their fingers laughin, children } hold }
 'An' *pouk* my hips. pluck

'See, here's a scythe, an' there's a dart,
 'They hae pierc'd mony a gallant heart;
 'But Doctor Hornbook wi' his art
 'An' cursed skill,
 'Has made them baith no worth a f—t,
 '*D—n'd haet* they'll kill! not a } whit }

''Twas but yestreen, nae farther gane,
 'I threw a noble throw at ane;
 'Wi' less, I'm sure, I've hundreds slain;
 'But deil-ma-care,
 'It just *play'd dirl* on the bane, gave a tremulous stroke
 'But did nae mair.

'Hornbook was by, wi' ready art,
 'An' had sae fortify'd the part,

* This gentleman, Dr. Hornbook, is professionally a brother of the sovereign order of the ferula; but, by intuition and inspiration, is at once an apothecary, surgeon, and physician.—*R. B.*

† Buchan's Domestic Medicine.—*R. B.* Dr. Wm. Buchan died in 1805. His book is still popular in Scotland.

‘Or mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings,
 ‘Distilled per se ;
 ‘Sal-alkali o’ midge-tail clippings,
 ‘And mony *mae*.’ more

‘*Waes me* for Johnie Ged’s* Hole now,’ woe is
 Quoth I, ‘if that *thae* news be true !’ these
 ‘His braw calf-ward† whare *gowans* grew, daisies
 ‘Sae white and bonie,
 ‘Nae doubt they’ll *rive it wi’ the plew* ; plough it up
 ‘They’ll ruin Johnie !’

The creature grain’d an *eldritch* laugh, ghastly and }
uncarthy }
 And says, ‘Ye needna yoke the *pleugh*, plough
 ‘Kirkyards will soon be till’d enough,
 ‘Tak ye nae fear :
 ‘They’ll a’ be trench’d wi mony a *sheugh*, trench
 ‘In twa-three year.

‘Whare I kill’d ane, a fair strae death, ‡
 ‘By loss o’ blood or want of breath,
 ‘This night I’m free to tak my *aith*, oath
 ‘That Hornbook’s skill
 ‘Has clad a score i’ their last *claith*, cloth
 ‘By drap an’ pill.

‘An honest *wabster* to his trade, weaver
 ‘Whase wife’s twa *nieves* were scarce weel-bred, fists
 Gat *tippence*-worth to mend her head, twopence
 ‘When it was *sair* ; sore
 ‘The wife *slade cannie* to her bed, slid quietly
 ‘But ne’er spak *mair*. more

* The grave-digger.—*R. B.* Ged’s Hole, the grave, the stomach of the insatiable pike. In Scotland the pike is called the ged.—*J. H.*

† Churchyard, so-called from being used as an enclosure for calves, etc.—*J. H.*

‡ Death in bed, which was often of straw.—*J. H.*

[The author himself has fixed the date of this poem, which, like *Tam-o'-Shanter*, was struck off almost complete at one heat; for Gilbert has told us that his brother repeated the stanzas to him on the day following the night of the *tiff* with Wilson at the mason lodge. John Wilson, parish schoolmaster at Tarbolton, had also a small grocery shop where he sold common drugs, and gave occasional medical advice in simple cases, and thus became a person of some importance in the village. According to Mr. Lockhart, he was not merely compelled, through the force and widely-spread popularity of this attractive satire, to close his shop, but to abandon his school-craft also, in consequence of his pupils, one by one, deserting him. "*Hornbook*" removed to Glasgow, and, by dint of his talents and assiduity, at length obtained the respectable situation of session-clerk of Gorbals parish. He died January 13, 1839. Many a time in his latter days he has been heard, "over a bowl of punch, to bless the lucky hour when the dominie of Tarbolton provoked the castigation of Robert Burns."

In the author's earlier editions the word *did*, in verse sixth, ungrammatically reads "does;" and line fifth of the opening stanza reads thus:—

"Great lies and nonsense baith to vend."]

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK,

AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD.—APRIL 1, 1785.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

WHILE briers an' woodbines budding green,
 An' *paitricks scraichin* loud at e'en, partridges screeching
 An' morning *poussie whiddin* seen, hare scudding
 Inspire my muse,
 This freedom, in an unknown frien',
 I pray excuse.

On Fasten-e'en* we had a *rockin*, social meeting or bee
 To *ca' the crack* and weave our stockin; to chat

* Shrovetide, a festival that used to be religiously observed in Scotland.—J. H.

And there was *muckle* fun and jokin, much
 Ye need na doubt ;
 At length we had a hearty *yokin*, set-to
 At '*sang about*.' song in turns

There was ae sang, amang the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleas'd me best, above
 That some kind husband had address
 To some sweet wife ;
 It *thirt'd* the heart-strings thro' the breast, thrilled
 A' to the life.

I've scarce heard ought describ'd sae weel,
 What gen'rous, manly bosoms feel ;
 Thought I, "can this be Pope, or Steele,
 Or Beattie's wark?"
 They *tauld* me 'twas an odd kind *chiel* told fellow
 About Muirkirk.*

It pat me *fidgin-fain* to hear't, excitedly eager
 An' sae about him there I *spier't*; enquired
 Then a' that *kent* him round declar'd knew
 He had *ingine*; genius (*ingenium*)
 That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,
 It was sae fine :

That, set him to a pint of ale,
 An' either *douce* or merry tale, quietly grave
 Or rhymes an' sangs he'd made himsel,
 Or witty catches—
 'Tween Inverness an' Teviotdale,
 He had few matches.

Then up I gat, an' swoor an *aith*, oath
 Tho' I should pawn my plough an' *graiith*, harness

* A little town among the hills in the southeast part of Ayrshire.—J. H.

Or die a *cadger pownie's* death,
 At some *dyke-back*,
 A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith,
 To hear your *crack*.

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
 Amaist as soon as I could spell,
 I to the *crambo-jingle* fell, rhyming
 'Tho' rude an' rough—
 Yet *crooning* to a *body's sel*, humming person's self
 Does *weel enough*. well enough

I am nae poet, in a sense,
But just a rhymers like by chance,
An' hae to learning nae pretence ;
Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
And say, "how can you e'er propose—
You wha *ken* hardly verse frae prose— know
 'To mak a sang?"
But, by your leave, my learned foes,
 Ye're maybe wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your schools—
Your Latin names for horns an' stools?
If honest Nature made you fools,
 What *sairs* your grammars? serves
Ye'd better taen up spades and *shools*, shovels
 Or *knappin-hammers*. stone-hammers

A set o' dull, conceited *hashes* fools
Confuse their brains in college classes !

They gang in *stirks*, and come out asses, ^{year-old}steers }
 Plain truth to speak ;
 An' *syne* they think to climb Parnassus, ^{thereafter}
 By dint o' Greek !

Gie me ae spark o' nature's fire, ^{give}
 That's a' the learning I desire ;
 Then tho' I drudge thro' *dub* an' mire ^{mud}
 At *pleugh* or cart, ^{plough}
 My muse, tho' hamely in attire,
 May touch the heart.

O for a *spark* o' Allan's* glee, ^{spark}
 Or Fergusson's, the *bauld an' slee*, ^{bold and sly}
 Or bright Lapraik's, my friend to be
 If I can hit it !
 That would be *lear* enough for me, ^{learning}
 If I could get it.

Now, sir, if ye *hae* friends enow, ^{have}
 Tho' real friends I b'lieve are few ;
 Yet, if your catalogue be *fu'*, ^{full}
 I'se no insist : ^{I will not}
 But, *gif* ye want ae friend that's true, ^{if}
 I'm on your list.

I *winna blaw* about mysel, ^{will not brag}
 As ill I like my *fauts* to tell ; ^{faults}
 But friends, an' folk that wish me well,
 They sometimes *roose* me ; ^{praise}
 Tho' I *maun* own, as mony still ^{must}
 As far abuse me.

* Allan Ramsay.

There's *ae wee faut* they whiles lay to me, one lit-
tle fault
 I like the lasses—Gude forgie me!
 For mony a *plack* they *wheedle frae* me coin
coax from
 At dance or fair;
 Maybe some *ither* thing they *gie* me, other give
 They *weel* can spare. well

But Mauchline Race* or Mauchline Fair,
 I should be proud to meet you there:
We'se gie ae night's discharge to care, we will
give one
 If we *forgather*; meet
 An hae a *swap* o' rhymin-ware interchange
 Wi' *ane anither*. one another

The four-gill chap,† we'se *gar* him clatter, make
 An' *kirsen* him wi' reekin water; christen
Syne we'll sit down an' tak our *whitter*, then drink
 To cheer our heart;
 An' faith, we'se be acquainted better
 Before we part.

Awa ye selfish, *warly* race, worldly
 Wha think that *havins*, sense, an' grace, manners
 Ev'n love an' friendship should give place
 To *catch-the-plack*! money-making
 I *dinna* like to see your face, do not
 Nor hear your *crack*. chatter

But ye whom social pleasure charms,
 Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms,
 Who hold your being on the terms,
 "Each aid the others,"
 Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
 My friends, my brothers!

* The race-course at Mauchline was on the high road near the poet's farm.

† The mutchkin, or pint, the largest measure for whiskey used in public-houses.—J. H.

But, to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the gristle,
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fiddle,*
Who am most fervent,
While I can either sing or whistle,
Your friend and servant.

[We have already seen, in the epistle to Davie, how indulgently Burns regarded the rhyming qualities of his Ayrshire compeers. The song referred to in the third stanza of this poem commended itself so much to his sympathies that he took this method of becoming acquainted with its supposed author. We say *supposed* author; for in reality it was not Lapraik's own, but a piece he had found in an old magazine, which, by altering its structure a very little, and putting in a Scotch expression here and there, he had the assurance to pass off as his own composition. Burns, who never knew or suspected the plagiarism, afterwards dressed up Lapraik's version and had it printed in Johnson's *Museum*, where it stands, No. 205, set to an air by Oswald. Lockhart praises the opening verse, but remarks that (this song excepted) "it is not easy to understand Burns' admiration of Lapraik's poetry." The reader will find the original poem in the *Weekly Magazine*, October 14, 1773.]

John Lapraik was nearly sixty years old when Burns sought acquaintance with him. He had inherited, through a line of ancestors, a small croft near Muirkirk; but happening to borrow money, by a bond thereon, from the Ayr Bank, he became involved in the ruin which soon overtook that unfortunate concern. On the strength of Burns' recorded admiration, the "Old Scottish Bard" ventured to have his poems printed, at the press of John Wilson, Kilmarnock; and these were published in 1788.]

(Lapraik's poems had little success, Burns being nearly his sole admirer. Chambers tells us that Burns, when he received Lapraik's letter in reply to this epistle, was sowing; and, so eagerly did he peruse it, that he let the sheet drop and spilled the seed, and it was not till he had finished reading that he discovered the loss he had sustained.—J. H.)

* Would make me fidget with pleasure.

Now comes the sax-an-twentieth simmer
 I've seen the bud upo' the timmer,
 Still persecuted by the *limmer* jade
 Frae year to year ;
 But yet, despite the *kittle kimmer*, skittish wench
 I, Rob, am here.

Do ye envy the city gent,
 Behint a *kist* to lie an' *sklent* ; chest prevaricate
 Or purse-proud, big wi' cent. per cent.
 An' *muckle wame*, large belly
 In some bit *brugh* to represent burgh
 A *bailie's* name? alderman's

Or is't the *paughty* feudal *thane*, supercilious peer
 Wi' ruffl'd *sark* an' glancing cane, shirt
 Wha thinks himsel *nae sheep-shank bane*, of no }
 little }
 account }
 But lordly stalks ;
 While caps and bonnets aff are *taen*, taken
 As by he walks?

"O Thou wha *gies* us each *guid* gift ! gives good
 Gie me o' wit an' sense a lift,
 Then turn me, if Thou please adrift,
 Thro' Scotland wide ;
 Wi' cits nor lairds I *wadna shift*, would not change
 In a' their pride !"

Were this the charter of our state,
 "On pain o' hell be rich an' great,"
 Damnation then would be our fate,
 Beyond remead ;
 But, thanks to heaven, that's no the *gate* way
 We learn our creed.

For thus the royal mandate ran,
 When first the human race began ;
 "The social, friendly, honest man,
 Whate'er he be—
 'Tis *he* fulfils great Nature's plan,
 And none but he."

O mandate glorious and divine !
 The followers o' the ragged nine *—
 Poor, thoughtless devils—yet may shine
 In glorious light ;
 While sordid sons o' Mammon's line
 Are dark as night !

Tho' here they scrape, an' squeeze, an' growl,
 Their worthless *nievefu'* of a soul handful
 May in some future carcase howl,
 The forest's fright;
 Or in some day-detesting owl
 May shun the light.

Then may Lapraik and Burns arise,
 To reach their native, kindred skies,
 And sing their pleasures, hopes an' joys,
 In some mild sphere ;
 Still closer knit in friendship's ties,
 Each passing year !

[Allan Cunningham says, respecting this poem, "I have heard one of our greatest English poets (Wordsworth) recite with commendation most of the stanzas, pointing out their all but inimitable ease and happiness of thought and language. He remarked, however, that Burns was either fond of out-of-the-way sort of words, or that he *made* them occasionally in his fits of feeling and fancy. The phrase, 'tapetless, ramfeezled hizzie,' in

* Motherwell, without a word of comment, altered this reading to "ragged followers o' the nine," which certainly seems a more consistent one. The change is adopted by Gilfillan.

particular, he suspected to be new to the Scotch dialect; but I quoted to him the following passage from a letter of William Cowper, dated August, 1787:—"Poor Burns loses much of his deserved praise in this country through our ignorance of his language. I despair of meeting with any Englishman who will take the pains that I have taken to understand him. His candle is light, but shut up in a dark lantern. I lent him to a very sensible neighbor of mine; but the uncouth dialect spoiled all; and, before he had read him through, he was quite *ramfeezled*.'"]

EPISTLE TO WILLIAM SIMSON,

SCHOOLMASTER, OCHILTREE.—MAY, 1785.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

I <i>gat</i> your letter, <i>winsome</i> Willie ;	got	winning
Wi' gratefu' heart I thank you <i>brawlie</i> ;		heartily
Tho' I <i>maun</i> say't, I <i>wad</i> be silly,	must	would
And <i>unco</i> vain,		very
Should I believe, my coaxin <i>billie</i> ,		brother
Your flatterin strain.		

But I'se believe ye kindly meant it :
 I *sud* be *laith* to think ye hinted should loath
 Ironie satire, *sidelins sklentied* glanced sideways
 On my poor musie ;
 Tho' in sic *phraisin* terms ye've penn'd it, flattering
 I scarce excuse ye.

My senses wad be in a <i>creel</i> ,*	whirl
Should I but dare a hope to <i>speel</i> ,	climb
Wi' Allan,† or wi' Gilbertfield,‡	
The <i>braes</i> o' fame ;	heights

*I should have lost my head. In Ayrshire, when a person is unduly excited or confused about anything, his senses are said to be "in a creel."

†Allan Ramsay, a celebrated Scotch poet of the beginning of the seventeenth century, was a barber in Edinburgh. His best known piece is a drama entitled, "The Gentle Shepherd."

‡William Hamilton, of Gilbertfield, a Scotch poet and contemporary of Allan Ramsay.

Or Fergusson,* the writer-chiel,
A deathless name.

(O Fergusson! thy glorious parts
Ill suited law's dry, musty arts!
My curse upon your *whunstane* hearts, whinstone
 Ye *E'nbrugh* gentry! Edinburgh
The tythe o' what ye waste at *cartes* of cards
 Wad *stow'd* his pantry!) stored

Yet when a tale comes i' my head,
Or lasses *gie* my heart a *screed*— give rent
As *whiles* they're like to be my *dead*, sometimes death
 (O sad disease!)
I *kittle* up my rustic reed; tickle
 It *gies* me ease. gives

Auld Coila,† now may *fidge fu' fain*, fidget with pride
She's gotten poets o' her *ain*; own
Chiels wha their *chanter*s winna *hain*, fellows bag- }
 But tune their lays, pipes spare }
Till echoes a' resound again
 Her weel-sung praise.

Nae poet thought her worth his while,
To set her name in measur'd style;
She lay like some *unkenn'd-of* isle unknown
 Beside New Holland,
Or whare wild-meeting oceans boil
 Besouth Magellan.

* Robert Fergusson, born 1751, educated at University of St. Andrews, and employed in the office of the Commissary Clerk, Edinburgh, published in 1773 a volume of poems characterized by humor, fancy and purity of language. Burns erected a memorial stone over his grave in Edinburgh.—J. H.

† Kyle. See note to *The Two Dogs*, p. 203.

Ramsay an' famous Fergusson
Gied Forth an' Tay a lift *aboon*; gave above
Yarrow an' Tweed, to *monie* a tune, many
 Owre Scotland rings; over
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, an' Doon*
 Naebody sings.

Th' Illissus, Tiber, Thames, an' Seine,
Glide sweet in monie a tunefu' line :
But, Willie, set your *fit* to mine, †
An' *cock* your crest ;
We'll *gar* our streams an' burnies shine
Up *wi'* the best !

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' *fells*, uplands
Her moors red-brown wi' heather bells,
Her banks an' *braes*, her *dens* and dells, heights hollows
Whare glorious Wallace
Aft bure the gree, as story tells, bore the palm
Frae *Suthron billies*. Southern }
competitors }

At Wallace' name, what Scottish blood
But boils up in a spring-tide flood !
Oft have our fearless fathers strode
By Wallace' side,
Still pressing onward, red-wat-shod, ‡
Or glorious died !

O sweet are Coila's <i>haughs</i> an' woods,	holms
When <i>lintwhites</i> chant amang the buds,	linnets
And <i>jinkin</i> hares, in amorous <i>whids</i> ,	playful capers
Their loves enjoy ;	
While thro' the braes the <i>cushat croods</i>	wood-pigeon } coos }
With <i>wailfu'</i> cry !	wailing

*The four principal streams of Ayrshire, all in, or bordering, Kyle.—J. H.

† Unite with me.—J. H.

† Shoes wet with blood.

‡Admirably descriptive of the amorous capers of March hares.—J. H.

While Highlandmen hate tolls an' taxes ;
 While moorlan *herds* like guid, fat shepherds
 braxies,* dead sheep
 While terra firma, on her axis,
 Diurnal turns ;
 Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
 In Robert Burns.†

POSTSCRIPT.

My memory's no worth a *preen*; pin
 I had *amaist* forgotten clean, almost
 Ye bade me write you what they mean
 By this 'new-light,'‡
 'Bout which our *herds* sae aft hae been pastors
 Maist like to fight. almost

In days when mankind were but *callans* boys
 At grammar, logic, an' sic talents,
 They took nae pains their speech to balance,
 Or rules to *gie*; give
 But spak their thoughts in plain,
 braid *lallans*, Lowland Scotch
 Like you or me.

In *thae* auld times, they thought the moon, these
 Just like a *sark*, or pair o' *shoon*, shirt shoes

*The sheep that die on the hills are the perquisite of the shepherd.—J. H.

†This is perhaps the solitary instance of the poet writing his name with one syllable prior to April 14, 1786. The closing stanza of the second epistle to Lapraik shows the short spelling, but that verse was so altered after the date referred to. The original MS. of the present poem has not been found.

‡*New-Light* was the term applied to the approximately rationalistic views held by a section of the Scottish church. The work of Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, entitled "The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin," had been extensively read in Scotland by both clergy and laity, and had given rise to a pretty definite form of rationalism. Even the poet's father was inclined to soften the rigid Calvinism of the orthodox or "Auld-Light" party. Burns himself was in full sympathy with the New Light section.—J. H.

Wore by degrees, till her last *roon* selvage
Gaed past their viewin ; went
 An' shortly after she was done
 They *gat* a new *ane*. got one

This past for certain, undisputed ;
 It *ne'er* cam i' their heads to doubt it, never in
 Till *chiels* gat up an' *wad* confute it, fellows would
 An' *ca'd* it wrang ; called
 An' *muckle din* there was about it, much noise
Baith loud an' 'lang. both

Some herds, weel learn'd upo' the *beuk*, book
 Wad *threap* auld folk the thing *misteuk* ; maintain old }
 For 'twas the auld moon turn'd a *neuk* mistook }
 An' out o' sight, corner
 An' *backlins-comin*, to the *leuk*, coming backward view
 She grew *mair* bright. more

This was denied, it was affirm'd ;
 The *herds and hissels* were alarm'd ; pastors and flocks
 The rev'rend gray-beards rav'd an' storm'd,
 That beardless *laddies* boys
 Should think they better were inform'd,
 Than their *auld daddies*. old dads

Frae less to mair, it *gaed* to *sticks* ; from went cudgels
Frae words an' *aiths*, to *clours* an' *nicks* ; oaths bruises }
 An' *monie* a fallow *gat* his licks, many got }
 Wi' hearty *crunt* ; knock on the head
 An' some, to learn them for their tricks,
 Were hang'd an' *brunt*. burned

This game was play'd in mony lands, r apostles }
 An' "auld-light"* *caddies*† *bure sic* hands, bore such }

*See note *New Light* on preceding page.

†Caddies were properly men who ran errands, etc., in the streets of Edinburgh ; hence, the word signifies one charged with a message, an apostle.—J. H.

Sae, ye observe that a' this *clatter* so idle talk
 Is naething but a "moonshine matter;"
 But tho' dull prose-folk Latin splatter
 In logic *tulyie*, contention
 I hope we bardies *ken* some better know
 Than mind sic *brulyie*. broil

[At the date of this epistle, William Simson was parish schoolmaster at the small village of Ochiltree, situated on the left bank of the river Lugar, at a distance of five miles south from the poet's farm. He appears to have introduced himself to Burns by sending him a complimentary letter, after having seen some of his poems in manuscript, particularly the "Holy Tulyie," to which Burns' postscript specially applies. In 1788, Simson was appointed parish teacher in the town of Cumnock, four miles farther up the Lugar, where he continued till his death, in 1815. It does not appear from the poet's correspondence, or otherwise, that the acquaintanceship betwixt Burns and Simson, thus so auspiciously begun in 1785, was continued in after-life. He was succeeded as teacher at Ochiltree in 1788 by a brother, Patrick Simson, who had been formerly parish schoolmaster at Straiton, in Carrick. A volume of rhyming-ware, left by William Simson, passed at his death into his brother's possession, and, judging from what has been published of its contents, he seems to have better merited the distinction—a "rhyme-composing brother" of Burns—than either Sillar or Lapraik. He had the good sense not to rush into print like them, on the mere strength of the kindly compliments paid to them by the Ayrshire Bard in his published epistles.

After William Simson's death, his brother Patrick was often visited at Ochiltree by wandering pilgrims, for the sake of the interest conferred by this admired epistle. Allan Cunningham, confounding the one brother with the other, makes reference to William Simson as still surviving in 1834. Through the kindness of the Rev. D. Hogg, Kirkmahoe, we have been shewn "Winsome Willie's" signature, which is our authority for dropping the letter *p* from his surname.]

ONE NIGHT AS I DID WANDER.

A FRAGMENT.—MAY, 1785.

(CROMER, 1808.)

ONE night as I did wander,
When *corn* begins to shoot, oats
I sat me down to ponder,
Upon an *auld* tree-root : old
Auld Ayr ran by before me,
And *bicker'd* to the seas ; careered cheerily
A *cushat crooded* o'er me, wood-pigeon cooed
That echoed through the braes.

[This fragment seems to have been intended as the opening of a poem similar in style to "Man was made to mourn." It has a descriptive ring about it, like the first verse of the "Holy Fair;" and the scenery indicated is not unlike that of Ballochmyle or Barskimming, the two nearest points where the poet could reach the river Ayr from Mauchline. The fragment first appeared in company with another little unfinished piece, in which the poet contemplates crossing the ocean, and being severed from his "Jean,"*]

FRAGMENT OF SONG—"MY JEAN!"

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1788.)

THO' cruel fate should bid us part,
Far as the pole and line,

* This and the three immediately following pieces are in the very peculiar position, that, while they are inserted in the poet's Glenriddell abridgement of his first Common-place Book, between the dates September, 1784, and June, 1785, they do not appear in the Common-place Book itself, now preserved at Greenock. On examining carefully the latter manuscript, one is forced to the conclusion that these four pieces never at any time formed a portion of that book. Robert Chambers, who never saw the Greenock MS. referred to, was stumbled at so early a date as May, 1785, "being attached to these pieces, especially to the song about 'My Jean,'" which, from internal evidence, would seem to belong to the first half of 1786. However, as Burns himself inserted these as forming a portion of his earliest Common-place Book, ending in October, 1785, we feel bound to place them in the order of time to which he assigned them.

Her dear idea round my heart,
 Should tenderly entwine.
 Tho' mountains rise, and deserts howl,
 And oceans roar between ;
 Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
 I still would love my Jean.

[The affection for Jean Armour displayed here is quite in keeping with the language and sentiment expressed in the "Epistle to Davie." Indeed, on comparing these, the reader will naturally conclude that they must have been composed about the same date. In the one, we find the poet-lover thus expressing himself—

"Her dear idea brings relief and solace to my breast ;"

and here he says, almost in the identical words—

"Her dear idea round my heart shall tenderly entwine."

Again, in the "Epistle," he invokes heaven to witness that—

"The life-blood streaming through my heart,
 Or my more dear immortal part,
 Is not more fondly dear."

And in this little song—the first sketch of the world-famous "Of a' the airts," &c.—the same language is employed :—

"Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
 I still would love my Jean."

The complete copy of the "Epistle to Davie," which the poet presented to Aiken in 1786, certainly bears the date "January, 1785," as we have already noticed ; but we must not therefore conclude (as Chambers does) that the *whole* of the poem was completed at so early a date. The references to Jean are thrown in near the *close* of the poem, and if it were now possible to get a sight of the original, as actually forwarded to Sillar in January, 1785, it would likely shew very different readings in the three closing stanzas, from those in the printed copy. The early date assigned to that poem was a puzzle to Lockhart, not only from its wonderful perfection in so very intricate and difficult a measure, but also from its glowing celebration of Jean during the very infancy of his acquaintance with her.]

SONG—RANTIN, ROVIN ROBIN.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

THERE was a lad was born in Kyle,*
 But whatna day o' whatna style, †
 I doubt it's hardly worth the while
 To be sae nice wi' Robin.

Chor.—Robin was a rovin boy,
 Rantin, rovin, rantin, rovin,
 Robin was a rovin boy,
 Rantin, rovin Robin!

Our monarch's hindmost year but *ane* one
 Was five-and-twenty days begun, ‡
 'Twas then a blast o' Janwar' win'
 Blew hansel § in on Robin.
 Robin was, &c.

The gossip *keekit* in his *loof*, peered palm
 Quo' *scho*, "Wha lives will see the proof, she
 This *waly* boy will be nae *coof*: goodly blockhead
 I think we'll *ca'* him Robin." call
 Robin was, &c.

"He'll *hae* misfortunes great an' *sma'*, have small
 But *ay* a heart *aboorn* them *a'*, ever above all
 He'll be a credit *till* us *a'*,— to
 We'll *a'* be proud o' Robin."
 Robin was, &c.

* The central district of Ayrshire. See note on *The Two Dogs*, p. 203.

† But which day of which style. The new style of computing time had been lately introduced, and both styles were used at this time in Scotland. In cities the new style was generally adopted, but people living in remote country districts still adhered to the old style, as is the case in Russia to this day.—J. H.

‡ January 25, 1759, the date of my bardship's vital existence.—R. B.

§ A hansel is the first gift given on any particular occasion or at any particular season.—J. H.

“But sure as three times three mak nine,
 I see by *ilka* score and line, every
 This chap will dearly like our kin’,
 So leeze me on* thee ! Robin.”
 Robin was, &c.

“*Guid* faith,” quo’ *scho*, “I doubt you, sir, good }
she }
 Ye *gar* the lasses lie aspar make
 But twenty *fauts* ye may hae *waur* faults worse
 So blessins on thee ! Robin.”
 Robin was, &c.

[Referring to our notes to the two preceding pieces, we may observe that this song displays a vivid forecast of the author’s coming fame. Dr. Waddell, in the mistaken belief that it was composed in 1784, calls it “a perfect prophetic and pictorial idyll, which must be accepted as a very singular and truthful anticipation of his own future greatness.”

The only variation of the poet’s text which we have to note is first found in Cunningham’s edition (1834). His reading of the two opening lines of the closing stanza is as follows:—

“Gude faith !” quo’ *scho*, “I doubt you gar
 The bonie lassie lie aspar.”

The reverend editor above quoted says on this point:—“All attempts to decorate or to enrich this verse with better rhymes and worse sense, not only vitiate its moral integrity, but destroy its pictorial truthfulness; in a word, vulgarise and debase it. That Cromek’s edition is the correct edition, there cannot be a shadow of a doubt; and it should be restored and preserved accordingly.”

Burns composed this song to the tune of “Dainty Davie,” and he has anxiously pointed out that the chorus is set to the low part of the melody. Templeton, the eminent vocalist, selected another air—“O gin ye were dead, gudeman”—for his own singing of this song, which necessitated not only an alteration of the words of the chorus to make it fit the music, but a change in other parts of the air to suit it to the words. The tune, “Dainty Davie,” is one of our oldest; it appears in Playford’s collection,

* Leeze me on : i. e., let me set my heart on.

1657; and as a proper vocal set of the melody is now nowhere to be found, we here annex it.

CANTY.

There was a lad was born in Kyle, But what-na day o' what-na style, I doubt its hard-ly worth the while To be sae nice wi' Ro - bin. Ro - bin was a ro - vin boy, Ran - tin, rov - in, ran - tin.

In the MS. of early pieces presented by the poet to Mrs. Dunlop, to which we have referred at pp. 11 and 33 *supra*, a remarkable travestie of the foregoing song is inserted thus:—

There was a birkie born in Kyle,
 But whatna day o' whatna style,
 I doubt its hardly worth the while
 To be sae nice wi' Davie.
 Leeze me on thy curly pow,
 Bonie Davie, dainty Davie!
 Leeze me on thy curly pow,
 Thou'se ay my dainty Davie.

The name "Davie," instead of Robin, is thus continued throughout the song, and at verse 4, line 3, instead of "He'll be a credit to us a'," we read, "He'll gie his daddie's name a blaw."]

(According to Chambers, there was some rumor, but upon no very valid authority so far as he could learn, that some wayfaring woman, who chanced to be present at the poet's birth, actually announced some such prophecy respecting the infant placed in her arms.—J. H.)

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT RUISE- SEAUX.*

(CROMEK, 1808.)

Now Robin lies in his last *lair*, resting-place
 He'll gabble rhyme, nor sing *nae mair*; no more
Could poverty, wi' hungry stare, cold
 Nae mair shall fear him;
 Nor anxious fear, nor *cankert* care, cankered
 E'er mair come near him.

To tell the truth, they seldom *fash't* him, troubled
 Except the moment that they crush'd him;
 For *sune* as chance or fate had hush't 'em soon
 Tho' e'er sae short,
 Then wi' a rhyme or sang he lash'd 'em,
 And thought it sport.

Tho' he was bred to *kintra-wark*, work on the farm
 And counted was baith *wight* and *stark*, stout strong
 Yet that was never Robin's mark
 To *mak* a man; make
 But tell him, he was learn'd and *clark*, clerkly
 Ye *roos'd* him than! extolled

[We are greatly mistaken if Burns did not compose this "Elegy" after he had issued his prospectus to publish the wonderful Kilmarnock volume. It seems highly probable that it was intended to occupy the last page of that volume, but withdrawn when he had composed the far superior "Poet's Epitaph," which so beautifully closes the work.

Until the original MS. shall be recovered, from which CromeK printed, in the "Reliques," the poet's own abridged copy of his first Common-place Book, the exact chronological position of the preceding four pieces cannot be definitely fixed.]

* Fr. for rivulets, or burns, a play upon his own name.

EPISTLE TO JOHN GOLDIE, IN KILMARNOCK,

AUTHOR OF THE GOSPEL RECOVERED.—AUGUST, 1785.

(THE GLENRIDDELL MSS., 1874.)

O GOWDIE, terror *o'* the whigs, of
 Dread *o'* blackcoats and reverend wigs !
 Sour Bigotry on his last legs
 Girns an' looks back, grins
 Wishing the ten Egyptian plagues
 May seize you quick.

Poor gapin, *glowrin* Superstition ! staring amazedly
Wae's me, she's in a sad condition : woe is me
 Fye ! bring Black Jock,* her state physician,
 To see her water :
 Alas, there's ground for great suspicion
 She'll ne'er get better.

Enthusiasm's past redemption,
Gane in a gallopin consumption : far gone
 Not *a'* her quacks, wi' *a'* their *gumption*, all smartness
 Can ever mend her ;
 Her feeble pulse *gies* strong presumption, gives
 She'll soon surrender.

Auld Orthodoxy lang did *grapple*, grope about
 For every hole to get a *stapple* ;† stopple
 But now she *fetches* at the *thrapple*, gasps throat
 An' fights for breath ;
 Haste, gie her name up in the chapel,‡
 Near unto death.

* The Rev. J. Russell, Kilmarnock.—R. B.

† A handful of straw used to stop a hole in a thatched roof is called a *stapple*. Orthodoxy long tried to stop all sources of error, and to repair all the injury the church received through "New-Light" heresy.—J. H.

‡ Get her prayed for in Mr. Russell's kirk (known as the chapel) as being at the point of death.—J. H.

It's you an' Taylor* are the chief
 'To blame for a' this black mischief; † all
 But could the L—d's *ain* folk get leave, own
 A *toom* tar barrel empty
 An' twa *red peats wad* bring relief, blazing turfs would
 And end the quarrel.

For me, my skill's but very *sma'*, small
 An' skill in prose I've *nane ava*; none at all
 But *quietlenswise*, between us twa, quietly
 Weel may ye speed! well
 And tho' they *sud* you *sair misca'*, should sore miscall
 Ne'er *fash* your head. trouble

E'en swinge the dogs, and thresh them *sicker!* soundly
 The *mair* they squeel ay *chap* the thicker; more lay on
 And still 'mang hands a hearty *bicker* beaker
 O' something stout;
 It gars an *owthor's* pulse beat quicker, author's
 And helps his wit.

There's naething like the honest *nappy*; strong drink
Whare'll ye e'er see men *sae* happy, where will so
 Or women *sonsie*, saft and *sappy*, plump juicy
 'Tween morn and morn,
 As them wha like to taste the *drappie*, drop drink
 In glass or horn? ‡

I've seen me *daez't* upon a time, dazed
 I scarce could wink or see a *styme*; glimmer
 Just ae *hauf-mutchkin'* does me prime, two gills
 (Ought less, is little,)
 Then back I rattle on the rhyme,
 As *gleg's* a *whittle*. sharp as knife

* Dr. Taylor, of Norwich.—R. B.

† Mischief has accent on last syllable.—J. H.

‡ Ale was generally drunk from horn quaichs or wooden caups. Glass was reserved for whisky.—J. H.

[The person thus addressed was a noteworthy individual. His father was the miller at Craigmill, on Cessnock water, in Galston parish, where the future philosopher was born, in 1717. He showed an early aptitude for science and mechanical skill, and soon became an adept in geometry, architecture and astronomy. While yet a young man, he removed to Kilmarnock, where he carried on business, first as a cabinet-maker, and afterwards as an extensive wine and spirit merchant; but all his leisure time was devoted to his favorite scientific pursuits and mechanical contrivances. In his religious views he was originally orthodox, and joined the Antiburgher congregation at Kilmaurs; but before he was fifty years old his opinions underwent a radical change. These he carried much beyond the Arminianism of the New Light party. In 1780 he published his opinions in three 8vo volumes, printed at Glasgow, of which a second edition appeared in 1785. These essays were extensively read, and the work was popularly termed "Gowdie's Bible."

At the date of Burns' epistle to him, Goldie was 68 years old. Whether the poet introduced himself by this means or had previously known him, it is impossible to tell; but certain it is that the bard relied much on Goldie's friendship and advice during his visits to Kilmarnock while his poems were at the press. We hear nothing of Goldie, however, in the poet's prose correspondence. His son was Lieut. Goldie, R.N., who entered the navy in 1803. The old gentleman himself survived to 1811.

This poem was first published in a very imperfect form in Stewart and Meikle's Tracts, 1799. There it has only five stanzas—the third and fourth being transposed, and the four concluding ones entirely wanting. The two closing verses of the present complete copy were published by Cromek in 1808, as a stray fragment found in one of the poet's Common-place Books. Allan Cunningham avers that he had seen a copy of the first *Epistle to Lapraik*, of which they formed a part, and were introduced between the sixth and seventh verses. This may be one of Allan's hap-hazard statements.

The following variation on the fourth verse appears in the Common-place Book, and is adopted by Chambers and Gilfillan:

But now she's got an unco ripple,
Haste, gie her name up i' the chapel
Nigh unto death;
See how she fetches at the thrapple,
And gasps for breath.]

THIRD EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK.

(LAPRAIK'S POEMS, 1788.)

Guid speed and *furder* to you, Johnie, good prosperity
Guid health, *hale han's* an' weather bonie; whole }
 Now, when ye're nickin down fu' cannie* hands }

The staff o' bread, †
 May ye ne'er want a *stoup* o' bran'y flagon
 To clear your head.

May Boreas never thresh your rigs, ‡
 Nor kick your *rickles* aff their legs, ricks off
 Sendin the stuff o'er muirs an' *haggs* mosses
 Like drivin wrack;
 But may the tapmost grain that wags
 Come to the sack.

I'm *bizzie*, too, an *skelpin* at it, busy working briskly
 But bitter, *daudin* showers hae *wat* it; beating wet
 Sae my *auld* stumpie pen I *gat* it old got
 Wi' *muckle wark*, much work
 An' took my jocteleg§ an' *whatt* it, cut or mended
 Like ony *clark*. clerk

It's now *twa* month that I'm your debtor, two
 For your *braw*, nameless, dateless letter, fine
 Abusin me for harsh ill-nature
 On holy men,
 While deil a hair yoursel ye're better,
 But mair profane.

* Cutting down with quiet skill.

† A Bible term for "bread, the staff of life."

‡ May the wind never thrash your ridges of ripe grain. This is a serious loss to a farmer, as the best of the grain (the "tap-pickle") is the most liable to be shaken out.—J. H.

§ Knife, so-called after Jacques de Liege, the name of a Flemish cutler. Up to the union of England and Scotland Flanders supplied Scotland with most of her cutlery.—J. H.

But let the kirk-folk ring their bells,
 Let's sing about our noble *sel's*: selves
 We'll cry nae *jads frae* heathen hills goddesses from
 To help, or *roose* us; inspire
 But *browster* wives an' whisky stills, brewer
 They are the muses.

Your friendship, sir, I *winna quat* it, will not quit
 An' if ye mak' objections at it,
 Then hand in *neive* some day we'll knot it, fist
 And witness take,
 An' when wi' *usquabae** we've *wat* it whiskey wet
 It winna break.

But if the *beast and branks* be spar'd horse and bridle
 Till *kye* be *gaun* without the herd,† kine going
 And a' the *vittel* in the yard, victual (crop)
 And *theekit* right, thatched
 I mean your *ingle-side* to guard fireside
 Ae winter night. one

Then muse-inspirin *aquavitæ**
 Shall mak' us *baith* sae *blythe* and witty, both cheerful
 Till ye forget ye're *auld an' gatty*, old and paunchy
 And be as *canty* merry
 As ye were nine year less than *thretty*— thirty
 Sweet ane an' twenty!

But stooks are *cowpet* wi' the blast, overturned
 And now the *sinn keeks* in the west, sun peeps
 Then I *maun* rin amang the rest, must
 An' quat my *chanter*; bagpipe
 Sae I subscribe mysel in haste,
 Yours, Rab the Ranter.

Sept. 13, 1785.

* From Gaelic *uisge-beatha*, water of life. *Usquebaugh* is a form of the same word, and whiskey is simply a corruption of *uisge*. *Aquavitæ* is a Latin translation of *usquebaugh*.—J. H.

† Till the crops are off the ground and cows can go unherded.—J. H.

EPISTLE TO THE REV. JOHN M'MATH,

INCLOSING A COPY OF "HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER," WHICH
HE HAD REQUESTED, SEPT. 17, 1785.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

WHILE at the *stook* the *shearers* *cow'r* shock }
reapers crouch }
To shun the bitter *blaudin* show'r, pelting
Or in *gulravage rinnin* SCOWR; joyous mischief running
To pass the time,
To you I dedicate the hour
In idle rhyme.

My musie, tir'd wi' mony a sonnet
On gown, an' *ban'*, an' *douse* black band grave
bonnet,* cap
Is grown *right eerie* now she's done it, sore afraid
Lest they shou'd blame her,
An' rouse their holy thunder on it
And anathem her.

I own 'twas rash, an' rather hardy,
That I a simple, country *bardie*, bard
Shou'd meddle wi' a pack sae sturdy,
Wha, if they ken me,†
Can easy, wi' a single wordie,
Louse h—ll upon me. loose

But I *gae* mad at their grimaces, go
Their sighin, cantin, grace-proud faces,
Their three-mile prayers, an' hauf-mile graces,
Their *raxin* conscience, elastic
Whase greed, revenge, and pride disgraces
Waur nor their nonsense. worse than

* Tired of satirizing the clergy.—J. H.

† Know me to be the author.—J. H.

There's Gaw'n,* *misca'd waur* than a beast, ^{miscalled} }
 Wha has mair honor in his breast ^{worse} }
 Than *mony* scores as *guid's* the priest many good as
 Wha sae abused him : who so
 And may a bard no crack his jest
 What way they've used him? the way

See him, the poor man's friend in need, †
 The gentleman in word an' deed—
 An' shall his fame an' honor bleed
 By worthless *skellums*, scallowags
 An' not a muse erect her head
 To *cove* the *blellums*? awe blusterers

O Pope, had I thy satire's darts
 To *gie* the rascals their deserts, give
 I'd rip their rotten, hollow hearts,
 An' tell aloud
 Their jugglin hocus-pocus arts
 To cheat the crowd.

God knows, I'm no the thing I shou'd be,
 Nor am I even the thing I cou'd be,
 But twenty times I rather would be
 An atheist clean,
 Than under gospel colors hid be
 Just for a screen.

An honest man may *like* a glass, love
 An honest man may like a lass,
 But mean revenge, an' malice *fause* false
 He'll still disdain,
 An' then cry zeal for gospel laws,
 Like some we *ken*. know

* Gavin Hamilton.

† This couplet was afterwards repeated, in the Dedication to Gavin Hamilton.

'They take religion in their mouth ;
 'They talk o' mercy, grace, an' truth,
 For what? to gie their malice *skouth*
 On some *puir wight*,
 An' hunt him down, *owre* right and ruth,
 To ruin *streicht*.

All hail, Religion ! maid divine !
 Pardon a muse *sae* mean as mine,
 Who in her rough imperfect line
 Thus *daur*s to name thee ;
 To stigmatise false friends of thine
 Can ne'er defame thee.

'Tho' blotch't and foul wi' *mony* a stain, *many*
An' far unworthy of thy train,
With trembling voice I tune my strain
 To join with those
Who boldly dare thy cause maintain
 In spite of foes :

In spite o' crowds, in spite o' mobs,
In spite o' undermining jobs,
In spite o' dark banditti stabs
 At worth an' merit,
By scoundrels, even wi' holy robes,
 But hellish spirit.

O Ayr ! my dear, my native ground,
Within thy presbyterial bound
A candid liberal band is found
Of public teachers,
As men, as christians too, renown'd,
An' manly preachers.

Sir, in that circle you are nam'd ;
Sir, in that circle you are fam'd ;

An' some, by whom your doctrine's blam'd
 (Which *gies* ye honor) gives
 Even, sir, by them your heart's esteem'd,
 An' winning manner.

Pardon this freedom I have *ta'en*, taken
 An' if impertinent I've been,
 Impute it not, good sir, in *ane* one

Whase heart ne'er wrang'd ye, whose
 But to his utmost would befriend
 Ought *that belang'd* ye. related to you

[The gentleman to whom the above epistle is addressed was assistant and successor to the Rev. Peter Wodrow, minister of Tarbolton, then in declining health through the infirmities of old age. "Auld Wodrow," and his young helper, M'Math, are both complimented in "The Twa Herds," as able preachers, of the liberal or "moderate" stamp. In course of years, Mr. M'Math fell into a morbid condition of mind, and eventually took to hard drinking, and died in the Isle of Mull, in 1825.

The two preceding epistles, dated within a few days of each other, specially refer to the bad harvest of 1785, which tended to discourage the poet at his farming, and perhaps to drive him to the muse for consolation. The signature to the first of these is a sobriquet borrowed from the popular song of "Maggie Lauder." Chambers tells us that in writing poems, such as the above, reflecting on the religious party to which he was opposed, Burns set at naught the earnest remonstrances of both his mother and his brother.—J. H.]

SECOND EPISTLE TO DAVIE,

A BROTHER POET.

(SILLAR'S POEMS, 1789.)

AULD NEIBOR,

Old Neighbor

I'm three times doubly o'er your debtor,
 For your *auld-farrant*, frien'ly letter; drolly cunning
 Tho' I *maun* say't, I doubt ye flatter, must
 Ye speak *sae* fair; so
 For my *puir*, silly, rhymin *clatter* poor tattle
 Some less *maun sair*. must serve

Hale be your heart, *hale* be your fiddle, sound
 Lang may your *elbuck jink an' diddle*, elbow move merrily
 To cheer you thro' the weary *widdle* maze
 O' *war'ly* cares ; worldly
 Till *bairns' bairns* kindly *cuddle* children's children }
 Your auld, grey hairs.* fondle }

But Davie, lad, *I'm rede* ye're *glaiokit* ; I fear thoughtless
 I'm *tauld* the muse ye *hae* negleckit ; told have
 An' *gif* it's sae, ye *sud* be licket if should
 Until ye *fyke* ; wince
 Sic *hauns* as you *sud* ne'er be *faiket*, should hands }
 Be *hain't* wha like. spared excused }

For me, I'm on Parnassus' brink, tearing make }
Rivin the words to *gar* them *clink* ; rhyme }
Whyles daez't wi' love, *whyles daez't* sometimes dazed
 wi' drink,
 Wi' *jads* or *masons*,† wenchens }
 An' *whyles*, but ay *owre* late, I think free-masons }
 Braw sober lessons. too fine

Of *a'* the thoughtless sons *o'* man, all of
 Commen' me to the *bardie clan* ; poet class
 Except it be some idle plan
 O' rhymin clink,
 The devil-*haet*—that I *sud ban*—a whit should swear
 They ever think.

Nae thought, *nae* view, *nae* scheme *o'* livin, no
Nae cares to *gie* us joy or grievin, give
 But just the *pouchie* put the *nieve* in, pocket hand
 An' while ought's there, helter- }
 Then, *hiltie skiltie*, we gae *scrievin*, skelter careering }
 An' *fash nae mair*. trouble no more

* This verse was repeated almost verbatim in the Epistle to Major Logan.

† Burns was at this time an ardent Free-Mason.—J. H.

Leeze me on rhyme! it's ay a treasure, commend me to
 My chief, *amaist* my only pleasure ; almost
 At hame, *a-fiel'*, at wark, or leisure, afield
 The muse, poor *hizzie!* hussy
 Tho' rough an' *raploch* be her measure, coarse
 She's seldom lazy.

Haud to the muse, my dainty Davie : hold
 The *warl'* may play you mony a *shavie*; world }
 But for the muse, she'll never leave ye, shabby }
 Tho' e'er sae *puir*, poor
Na, even tho' limpin *wi'* the *spavie* not with spavin
 Frae door to door. from

[If David Sillar, then a grocer in Irvine, neglected the muses at the date of this epistle (supposed to be about October, 1785), he was soon stimulated to exertion by the success of Burns' first publication, and induced to imitate him, so far as could be done, by typography and stationery. This epistle of Burns he introduced in the early pages of his book ; but, in truth, it was the only valuable thing in the volume. Davie played on the violin a little : hence the reference in the second stanza.]

SONG—YOUNG PEGGY BLOOMS.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1787.)

YOUNG Peggy blooms our boniest lass,
 Her blush is like the morning,
 The rosy dawn, the springing grass,
 With early gems adorning.
 Her eyes outshine the radiant beams
 That gild the passing shower,
 And glitter o'er the crystal streams,
 And cheer each fresh'ning flower.

Her lips, more than the cherries bright,
 A richer dye has graced them ;
 They charm th' admiring gazer's sight,
 And sweetly tempt to taste them ;

Her smile is as the evening mild,
When feather'd pairs are courting,
And little lambkins wanton wild,
In playful bands disporting.

Were Fortune lovely Peggy's foe,
Such sweetness would relent her ;
As blooming Spring unbends the brow
Of surly, savage Winter.
Detraction's eye no aim can gain,
Her winning powers to lessen ;
And fretful Envy grins in vain
The poison'd tooth to fasten.

Ye Pow'rs of Honor, Love, and Truth,
From ev'ry ill defend her !
Inspire the highly-favor'd youth
The destinies intend her :
Still fan the sweet connubial flame
Reponsive in each bosom ;
And bless the dear parental name
With many a filial blossom.

[Burns seems to have taken considerable pains with this fine composition, which, though highly finished, is somewhat too artificial to have been a spontaneous outburst of personal passion. The subject of it was Miss Peggy Kennedy, the daughter of a Carrick laird, and a relative of Mrs. Gavin Hamilton. The poet was introduced to her when she was on a visit to the Hamiltons. She was then a blooming young woman of seventeen, and was understood to be betrothed to McDowall, of Logan, the youthful representative of the oldest and richest family in Galloway ; but, according to Chambers, "a train of circumstances lay in her path, which eventually caused the loss of her good name, and her early death." We shall again have occasion to refer to this lady as the supposed subject of another piece by Burns, "Fragment on Sensibility." The poet enclosed the present verses to Miss Kennedy in a letter, concluding thus : "That the arrows of misfortune may never reach your heart—that the snares of villany may never beset you in the road of life—that INNOCENCE may hand you by the path of HONOR to the dwelling of PEACE, is the sincere wish of him who has the honor to be," &c.]

SONG—FAREWELL TO BALLOCHMYLE.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1790.)

THE Catrine woods were yellow seen,
 The flowers decay'd on Catrine *lee*, lea
 Nae *lav' rock* sang on hillock green, lark
 But nature sicken'd on the *e'e*. eye
 Thro' faded groves Maria sang,
Hersel in beauty's bloom the while; herself
 And *ay* the wild-wood echoes rang, ever
 Fareweel the *braes* o' Ballochmyle! steep banks

Low in your wintry beds, ye flowers,
 Again ye'll flourish fresh and fair;
 Ye birdies * dumb, in with'ring bowers,
 Again ye'll charm the vocal air.
 But here, alas! for me nae mair
 Shall birdie charm, or floweret smile;
 Fareweel the bonie banks of Ayr,
 Fareweel, fareweel! sweet Ballochmyle!

[This beautiful lyric was composed about the same time as the preceding song. Ballochmyle had long been the property of the Whitefoord family; but, about this period, Sir John Whitefoord's misfortunes, arising chiefly through his connections with the Ayr Bank, obliged him to sell his estates. The "Maria" of this song was Miss Whitefoord, who afterwards became Mrs. Cranstoun. The "Catrine Woods," and "Catrine Lea," are in the immediate neighborhood of Ballochmyle, and were then the property of Professor Dugald Stewart. The fine scenery there is at the distance of about two miles from Mauchline, and was a favorite haunt of Burns while he lived at Mossgiel.]

* Burns makes frequent use of the Scotch diminutive in *ie* with fine effect.—J. H.

FRAGMENT—HER FLOWING LOCKS.

(CROMEK, 1808.)

HER flowing locks, the raven's wing,
 Adown her neck and bosom *hing*; hang
 How sweet unto that breast to cling,
 And round that neck entwine her!

Her lips are roses *wat* wi' dew, wet
 O, what a feast, her bonie *mou*! mouth
 Her cheeks a *mair* celestial hue, more
 A crimson still diviner!

[This little "artist's sketch" of female loveliness has no certain history attached to it. Cunningham connects it with a Mauchline incident; and, if he is right in that respect, it seems probable that our poet intended it as a portrait of Miss Whitefoord.]

HALLOWEEN.*

[KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.]

The following poem will, by many readers, be well enough understood; but for the sake of those who are unacquainted with the manners and traditions of the country where the scene is cast, notes are added, to give some account of the principal charms and spells of that night, so big with prophecy to the peasantry in the west of Scotland. The passion of prying into futurity makes a striking part of the history of human nature in its rude state, in all ages and nations; and it may be some entertainment to a philosophic mind, if any such honor the author with a perusal, to see the remains of it among the more enlightened in our own.—*R. B.*

* (All Hallow Eve or the eve of All Saints' Day) is thought to be a night when witches, devils, and other mischief-making beings are all abroad on their baneful, midnight errands; particularly those aerial people, the fairies, are said, on that night, to hold a grand anniversary.—*R. B.*

"Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
The simple pleasures of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art."

GOLDSMITH.

UPON that night, when fairies light
On Cassilis Downans * dance,
Or *owre* the *lays*, in splendid blaze, over leas
On sprightly coursers prance;
Or for Colean the rout is ta'en,
Beneath the moon's pale beams;
There, up the Cove, † to stray an' rove,
Among the rocks and streams
To sport that night:

Among the bonie winding banks,
Where Doon *rins*, *wimplin*, clear; runs meandering
Where Bruce ‡ *ance* ruled the martial ranks, once
An' shook his Carrick spear;
Some merry, friendly, country-folks
Together did convene,
To burn their *nits*, an' *pou* their *stocks*, nuts pull, kale-stalks;
An' *haud* their Halloween hold
Fu' blythe that night. full merry

The lasses *feat*, an' cleanly neat, trim
Mair braw than when they're fine; more attractive
Their faces blythe, fu' sweetly *kythe*, appear
Hearts *leal*, an' warm, an' *kin'*: loyal kind

* Certain little, romantic, rocky, green hills, in the neighborhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassilis.—R. B.

† A noted cavern near Colean House, called the Cove of Colean; which, as well as Cassilis Downans, is famed, in the country, for being a favorite haunt of the fairies.—R. B.

‡ The famous family of that name, the ancestor of ROBERT, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls of Carrick.—R. B. Carrick is the most southern of the three divisions of Ayrshire, which are Cunningham, Kyle and Carrick.

The lads sae *trig*, wi' *wooer-babs* spruce love-knots
 Weel-knotted on their *garten*; garter
 Some *unco blate*, an' some wi' *gabs* exceedingly shy }
Gar lasses' hearts *gang startin* make chatter }
Whyles fast at night. sometimes go beating

Then, first an' foremost, thro' the *kail*, greens
 Their 'stocks'* *maun* a' be sought ance; must
 They *steek* their *een*, an' *grape* an' shut eyes grope
wale choose
 For *muckle* anes, an' *straught* anes, large straight
 Poor *hav'rel* Will *fell aff the drift*, half-witted }
 An' wandered thro' the 'bow-kail,† went all wrong }
 An' *pou't*, for want o' better shift, pulled
 A *runt*, was like a sow-tail stalk
 Sae *bow't* that night. crooked

Then, *straught* or crooked, *yird* or straight earth
nane, none
 They roar an' cry a' *throw'ther*; confusedly
 The vera *wee-things*, *toddlin*, *rin*, children run }
 Wi' *stocks out* owre their totteringly }
shouther: stalks over
 An' *gif* the *custok's* sweet or sour, whether }
 Wi' *jocitelegs*‡ they taste them; heart of the stalk }
 Syne *cozily*, *aboon* the door, clasp-knives
 snugly above

* The first ceremony of Halloween is, pulling each a "stock," or plant of kail. They must go out, hand in hand, with eyes shut, and pull the first they meet with: its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic of the size and shape of the grand object of all their spells—the husband or wife. If any "yird," or earth, stick to the root, that is "tocher," or fortune; and the taste of the "custoc," that is, the heart of the stem, is indicative of the natural temper and disposition. Lastly, the stems, or, to give them their proper appellation, the "runts," are placed somewhere above the head of the door; and the Christian names of people whom chance brings into the house are, according to the priority of placing the "runts," the names in question.—R. B.

† Cabbage. The cabbage-stalk is a miserable make-shift for the legitimate kale-runt. None but a poor "hav'rel" like Willie would ever draw a cabbage for a kale. This is another of Burns' inimitable minute touches of humor.—J. H.

‡ See note on p. 132.

Wi' *cannie* care, they've plac'd them cunning
To lie that night.*

The lasses staw frae 'mang them a',†
To *pou* their stalks o' corn; ‡ pull
But Rab slips out, an' *jinks* about, dodges
Behint the *muckle* thorn: large
He *grippet* Nelly hard an' fast; caught
Loud *skirl'd* a' the lasses; screamed
But her tap-pickle § *maist* was lost, nearly
Whan *kiutlin* in the 'fause-house' || fondling
Wi' him that night.

The *auld guid-wife's weel-hoordit* old mistress' }
nits ** well-hoarded }
Are round an' round divided,
An' mony lads' an' lasses' fates
Are there that night decided :
Some kindle *couthie*, side by side, lovingly
An' burn *thegither* trimly ; together
Some start awa wi' saucy pride,
An' jump out owre the *chimlie* chimney
Fu' high that night.

* They must be placed with such care that it can be easily distinguished under whose "runt" each particular entrant next morning passes—J. H.

† The girls stole out from amongst them all.

‡ They go to the barnyard, and pull each, at three several times, a stalk of oats. If the third stalk wants the "top-pickle," that is, the grain at the top of the stalk, the party in question will come to the marriage-bed anything but a maid.—R. B.

§ Maidenhood. The "tap-pickle" is the most valuable grain of the ear.

|| When the corn is in a doubtful state, by being too green or wet, the stack-builder, by means of old timber, etc., makes a large apartment in his stack, with an opening in the side which is fairest exposed to the wind: this he calls a "fause-house."—R. B.

** Burning the nuts is a favorite charm. They name the lad and lass to each particular nut, as they lay them in the fire; and according as they burn quietly together, or start from beside one another, the course and issue of the courtship will be.—R. B.

Jean slips in twa, wi' *tentie e'e*; watchful eye
 Wha 'twas, she *wadna* tell; would not
 But this is *Jock*, an' this is me, Jack
 She says *in to hersel*: to herself
 He *bleez'd owre* her, an' she owre him, blazed over
 As they *wad* never *mair* part; would more
 Till fuff! he started up the *lum*, chimney
 And Jean had e'en a *sair* heart sore
 'To see't that night.

Poor Willie, wi' his *bow-kail runt*, cabbage-stock
 Was *brunt* wi' *primsie Mallie*; burned }
 An' Mary, nae doubt, took the *drunt*, prudish Mary } pet
 'To be compar'd to Willie :
 Mall's nit *lap* out, wi' pridefu' fling leapt
 An' her *ain fit*, it *brunt* it; own foot burned
 While Willie lap, an' *swoor* by 'jing,' swore
 'Twas just the way he wanted
 'To be that night.

Nell had the 'fause-house' in her min',
 She *pits hersel* an' Rob in; puts herself
 In loving *bleeze* they sweetly join, blaze
 Till white in *ase* they're sobbin: ashes
 Nell's heart was dancin at the view;
 She whisper'd Rob to *leuk* for't: look
 Rob, *stowlins*, *prie'd* her bonie stealthily tasted
mou, mouth
 Fu' *cozie* in the *neuk* for't, snugly nook
 Unseen that night.

But *Merran* sat behint their backs, Marion
 Her thoughts on Andrew Bell;
 She lea'es them gashin at their cracks,*
 An' slips out by hersel :

*She leaves them busily engaged in their gossip.

She thro' the yard *the nearest takes*, } takes the }
 An' for the kiln she goes then, } shortest way }
 An' darklins *grapet* for the '*bauks*,' groped rafters
 And in the 'blue-clue'* throws then,
 Right *fear't* that night. afraid

An' ay she *win't*, an' ay she *swat*, wound perspired
 I *wat* she made nae *jaukin*; wot delay
 Till something held within the *pat*, pot
 Guid L—d! but she was quaukin!
 But whether 'twas the deil himsel,
 Or whether 'twas a *bauk-en*', end of a rafter
 Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
 She did *na* wait on talkin not
 To *spier* that night. enquire

Wee Jenny to her *graunie* says, grand-dam
 "Will ye go *wi'* me, *graunie*? with
 I'll eat the apple at the glass,†
 I gat *frae* uncle Johnie:" from
 She *fuff't* her pipe *wi'* *sic a lunt*,‡ puffed }
 In wrath she was sae *vap'rin*, with such fury }
 She notic't na an *aizle* brunt vapoing
 Her braw, new, *worset* apron burning cinder
 Out thro' that night. worsted
 through and }
 through }

"Ye little skelpie-limmer's-face!§
 I *daur* you try sic sportin, dare

*Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions: Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and, darkling, throw into the "pot" a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one; and, towards the latter end, something will hold the thread: demand, "Wha hauds?" *i. e.*, who holds? and answer will be returned from the kiln-pot by naming the christian and surname of your future spouse.—*R. B.*

†Take a candle and go alone to a looking-glass; eat an apple before it, and some traditions say, you should comb your hair all the time; the face of your conjugal companion, *to be*, will be seen in the glass, as if peeping over your shoulder.—*R. B.*

‡She puffed her pipe with such fury that she made its contents red hot, and an ember fell out and burned a hole in her apron.—*J. H.*

§A technical term in female scolding.—*R. B.*

As seek the <i>foul thief</i> any place,	d—1 any
For him to <i>spae</i> your fortune :	foretell
Nae doubt but ye may <i>get a sight</i> !	see something }
Great cause ye <i>hae</i> to fear it ;	"uncanny" }
	have
For mony a ane has gotten a fright,	
An' liv'd an' died <i>deleeret</i> ,	delirious
On <i>sic</i> a night.	such

"Ae <i>hairst</i> afore the Sherra-moor,*	harvest
I mind't as weel's <i>yestreen</i> —	yester-eve
I was a <i>gilpey</i> then, I'm sure	young hussy
I was <i>na</i> past fyfteen :	not
The simmer had been <i>cauld</i> an' <i>wat</i> ,	cold and wet
An' <i>stuff</i> was <i>unco</i> ' green ;	crops uncommonly
An' ay a <i>rantin kirn</i> we <i>gat</i> ,	merry harvest-home got
An' just on Halloween	
It fell that night.	

"Our ' <i>stibble-rig</i> ' was Rab M'Graen,	leader of the }
A clever, sturdy <i>fallow</i> ;	reapers }
	fellow
His <i>sin</i> gat <i>Eppie</i> Sim wi' <i>wean</i> , son	Elspeth child
That liv'd in Achmacalla :	
He gat hemp-seed,† I mind it weel,	
An' he made <i>unco</i> light o't ;	very
But <i>mony</i> a day was <i>by himsel</i> ,	many out of his mind
He was <i>sae</i> sairly frightened	so
That vera night."	

*The battle of Sheriffmuir was fought between the Jacobite clans, led by the Earl of Mar, and the Royalists, led by Argyle, in 1715, on the northern slope of the Ochil hills, near Dunblane.—J. H.

†Steal out, unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp-seed, harrowing it with anything you can conveniently draw after you. Repeat, now and then—"Hemp-seed I saw thee, hemp-seed I saw thee; and him (or her) that is to be my true love, come after me and pou thee." Look over your left shoulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp. Some traditions say, "Come after me and shaw thee," that is, show thyself; in which case it simply appears. Others omit the harrowing, and say, "Come after me and harrow thee."—R. B.

Then up gat *fechtin* Jamie Fleck, fighting
 An' he *swoor* by his conscience, swore
 That he could saw hemp-seed a peck ;
 For it was a' but nonsense :
 The auld guidman *raught* down the *pock*, reached
 An' out a handfu' *gied* him ; bag } gave
Syne bad him slip *frae* 'mang the folk, then from
 Sometime when nae ane *see'd* him, observed
 An' try't that night.

He marches thro' amang the *stacks*, oat-stacks
 Tho' he was something *sturtin* ; nervous
 The *graiþ* he for a harrow taks, three-pronged-fork
 An' *haurls* at his *curpin* : drags rear
 And ev'ry now an' then, he says,
 "Hemp-seed I *saw* thee, sow
 An' her that is to be my lass
 Come after me, an' draw thee
 As fast this night."

He whistl'd up 'Lord Lenox' March,'*
 To keep his courage cheery ;
 Altho' his hair began to arch,
 He was sae *fley'd* an' *eerie* : frightened dismal
 Till presently he hears a squeak,
 An' then a *grane* an' *gruntle* ; groan grunt
 He *by* his shouther *gae* a *keek*, over gave a peep
 An' tumbled wi' a *wintle* reel
Out-owre that night. right over

He roar'd a horrid murder-shout,
 In dreadfu' desperation !
 An' young an' auld come *rinnin* out, running
 An' hear the sad narration :

* A popular Scotch tune.

He *swoor* 'twas *hilchin* Jean M'Craw, swore limping
 Or *crouchie Merran* Humphie— crook-backed Marion
 Till stop! she trotted thro' them a';
 An' wha was it but *grumphie* the pig
Asteer that night? stirring

Meg fain *wad* to the barn *gaen*, Margaret would }
 To *winn* three wechts o' naething; * have gone }
 But for to meet the deil *her lane*, by herself
 She *pat but little faith* in: had not much heart for
 She gies the *herd* a *pickle* nits, cow-herd few
 An' *twa* red cheekit apples, two
 To watch, while for the barn she sets,
 In hopes to see *Tam Kipples* Tom
 That vera night.

She turns the key wi' *cannie thraw*, cautious twist
 An' *owre* the threshold ventures; over
 But first on *Sawnie* gies a *ca'*, Alexander call
 Syne *bauldly* in she enters: boldly
 A *ratton* rattl'd up the *wa'*, rat wall
 An' she cry'd, L—d preserve her!
 An' ran thro' *midden-hole* an' a', dung-pit
 An' pray'd wi' zeal and fervor,
Fu' fast that night. full

They *hoy't* out Will, wi' *sair* advice; urged much
 They *hecht* him some fine *braw ane*; promised }
 pretty girl }

* This charm must likewise be performed unperceived and alone. You go to the barn, and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible; for there is danger that the being about to appear may shut the doors, and do you some mischief. Then take that instrument used in winnowing the corn, which in our country dialect we call a "wecht," and go through all the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times, and the third time an apparition will pass through the barn, in at the windy door, and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance or retinue, marking the employment or station in life.—R. B. (A wecht is like a riddle, only having leather in place of wire. A small wecht resembles a drum-head.—J. H.)

It chane'd the stack he *faddom't* thrice,* fathomed
 Was timmer-propt for thrawin : †
 He taks a *swirlie* auld moss-oak crooked
 For some black, *grousome carlin* ; ugly old woman
 An' *loot a winze*, an' drew a stroke, uttered an }
 Till skin in *blypes* cam *haurlin* large pieces stripping
Aff's nieves that night. off his fists

A wanton widow *Leezie* was, Elizabeth
 As *cantie* as a *kittlen*; playful kitten
 But och ! that night, amang the *shaws*, trees
 She gat a fearfu' *settlin* ! setting down
 She thro' the whins, an' by the *cairn*, heap of stones
 An' owre the hill gaed *scrievin*; careering
 Whare three *lairds'* *lan's* met at a land-owners' }
 burn, ‡ estates
 To dip her left *sark-sleeve* in, shirt-sleeve
 Was bent that night.

<i>Whyles</i> owre a <i>linn</i> the burnie plays,	sometimes }
As thro' the glen it <i>wimpl't</i> ;	cascade }
<i>Whyles</i> round a rocky <i>scaur</i> it strays,	meandered
<i>Whyles</i> in a <i>wiel</i> it dimpl't;	bluff
<i>Whyles</i> glitter'd to the nightly rays,	eddy
Wi' <i>bickerin</i> , dancin dazzle ;	hu.ying
<i>Whyles</i> <i>cookit</i> † underneath the braes,	coquetted
Below the spreading hazle	
Unseen that night.	

* Take an opportunity of going unnoticed to a "bear-stack," and fathom it three times round. The last fathom of the last time, you will catch in your arms the appearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow.—*R. B.*

† Propped up by timber to keep it erect, or from throwing.—J. H.

‡ You go out, one or more (for this is a social spell), to a south running spring, or rivulet, where "three lairds' lands meet," and dip your left shirt-sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake, and, some time near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it.—*R. B.*

Amang the *brachens*, on the *brae*, ferns knoll
 Between her an' the moon,
 The deil, or else an *outler quey*, outlying heifer
 Gat up an' *ga'e a croon*: gave low
 Poor Leezie's heart maist *lap the* leapt from }
 hool; its case }

Near *lav' rock-height* she jumpet, lark-high
 But *mist a fit, an'* in the pool missed a foot and
 Out-owre the *lugs* she plumpet, ears
 Wi' a plunge that night.

In order, on the clean hearth-stane,
 The 'luggies' * three are ranged ;
 An' ev'ry time great care is *ta'en* taken
 To see them duly changed :
Auld uncle John, *wha* wedlock's joys old who
 Sin' 'Mar's-year' † did desire,
 Because he gat the *toom* dish thrice, empty
 He heav'd them on the fire,
 In wrath that night.

Wi' merry sangs, an' friendly cracks,
 I *wat* they did *na* weary ; wot not
 And *unco* tales, an' funnie jokes— strange mysterious
 Their sports were cheap an' *cheery*: cheerful
 Till butter'd *sow'ns*, ‡ wi' fragrant fine meal porridge
 lunt, steam
 Set a' their *gabs a-steerin*; mouths agoing

* Take three dishes, put clean water in one, foul water in another, and leave the third empty; blindfold a person, and lead him to the hearth where the dishes are ranged; he (or she) dips the left hand: if by chance in the clean water, the future (husband or) wife will come to the bar of matrimony a maid; if in the foul, a widow; if in the empty dish, it foretells, with equal certainty, no marriage at all. It is repeated three times, and every time the arrangement of the dishes is altered.—*R. B.* (Luggies are wooden mugs with ear-shaped handles, —*J. H.*)

† 1715, when the Earl of Mar headed an insurrection. See note on *Sherramuir*, at Stanza 13.

‡ Sowens, with butter instead of milk to them, is always the Halloween Supper.—*R. B.*

Syne, wi' a social glass o' *strunt*, then spirits
 They parted aff careerin
 Fu' blythe that night.

[The author's own notes to this long descriptive poem are so complete, that we require to add very little to the information they contain. The poet has selected, as the scene of those old customs and superstitious ceremonies, not the locality of his riper years, but that of his infancy and boyhood. Both in Alloway and at Mount Oliphant, he lived in the close neighborhood of Colzean and Cassilis Downans. (Many of the ceremonies appropriate to Halloween have now fallen into disuse. Meetings of young people still take place, both in town and country; but their frolics are usually limited to ducking for apples in tubs of water, burning nuts, the lottery of the "luggies," and pulling kale-stalks.—J. H.)

In the sixteenth stanza, the mention of a place is introduced, which the poet names "Achmacalla." We believe there is no such locality in Carrick, or even in Ayrshire; the rhyme required it, and the name was coined accordingly. The fourth stanza from the close of the poem is generally quoted as the finest descriptive passage, within small compass, to be found in poesy. Respecting this production, Mr. Lockhart says,—“Hallowe'en, a descriptive poem, perhaps even more exquisitely wrought than the 'Holy Fair,' and containing nothing that could offend the feelings of anybody, was produced about the same period. Burns' art had now reached its climax.”]

TO A MOUSE,

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH
 NOVEMBER, 1785.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

WEE, *sleeket*, *cowrin*, tim'rous beastie, sleek crouching
 O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
 Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
 Wi' *bickerin brattle*! scurrying scamper
 I wad be *laith* to rin an' chase thee, loath
 Wi' murderin' pattle!*

*An implement for clearing the plow of clods, etc.—J. H.

But Mousie, thou art no *thy lane*,
 In proving foresight may be vain;
 The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft agley,*
 An' *lea'e* us nought but grief and pain,
 For promised joy!

alone

oft miscarry

leave

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
 The present only toucheth thee:
 But och! I backward cast my *e'e*,
 On prospects drear!
 An' forward, tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear!

eye

[We have no variations to note here. The poem seems to have issued perfect from the mint of the author's mind, when he suddenly stopped the ploughshare's farther progress on observing the tiny creature escape across the rig. This is generally regarded as one of the most faultless of the author's productions, and unmatched even by the "Mountain Daisy" in originality and interest. "It is difficult to decide (writes Currie) whether this 'Address' should be considered as serious or comic. If we smile at the 'bickering brattle' of this little flying animal, it is a smile of tenderness and pity. The descriptive part is admirable; the moral reflections beautiful, arising directly out of the occasion; and in the conclusion there is a deep melancholy, a sentiment of doubt and dread that rises to the sublime."]

(Burns ploughed with four horses, and required a "gadsman" to assist in driving, while he held the plough. John Blane, who acted as "gadsman" on this occasion, Chambers tells us, survived Burns sixty years, and had a distinct recollection of turning up the mouse. Boy-like, he ran after the creature to kill it, but was checked and recalled by his master, who, he observed, became thereafter thoughtful and abstracted. Burns soon after read the poem to Blane.—J. H.)

*Few, if any, of Burns' inimitably terse and pithy aphorisms have been so frequently quoted as this. Fraught with wit and wisdom, it has become proverbial wherever the English language is known.—J. H.

EPITAPH ON JOHN DOVE, INNKEEPER.

(STEWART AND MEIKLE'S TRACTS, 1799.)

HERE lies Johnie Pigeon ;

What was his religion

*Whae*ever desires to *ken*, whoever know
To some other *warl'* world

Maun follow the *carl*, must fellow

For here Johnie Pigeon had *nane* ! none

Strong ale was ablution—

Small beer—persecution,

A dram was "*memento mori* !"

But a full-flowing bowl

Was the saving his soul,

And port was celestial glory.

[The only variation to be noted here is in the last line but one: Chambers has "the joy of his soul;" but the change is no improvement, whatever the authority for it. John Dove, or more familiarly, "Johnie Doo," was mine host of the Whitefoord Arms Inn at Mauchline, in the main street, opposite the church, at the corner of a cross street, named Cowgate. If we mistake not, he was the "Paisley John" of another poem by Burns, which would indicate that he originally hailed from that town. We have Gilbert Burns' authority for believing that the poet never frequented public houses till he had almost formed the resolution to become an author. Certain it is, before the close of the year 1785, Burns was the leading member of a bachelor's club of a very odd character, which held stated meetings at the "Whitefoord Arms." It was a kind of secret association, the professed object of which was to search out, report, and discuss the merits and demerits of the many scandals that cropped up from time to time in the village. The poet was made perpetual president; John Richmond, a clerk with Gavin Hamilton, writer, was appointed "Clerk of Court"—for they dignified the mock solemnity of their meetings by adopting judicial styles and forms;—James Smith, a draper in the village, was named "procurator fiscal," and to William Hunter, shoemaker—"weel skill'd in dead and living leather"—was assigned the office of "messenger-at-arms." Having premised thus much concerning this club of rare fellows, we refer the reader to page 400 for the "Court of Equity."]

EPITAPH FOR JAMES SMITH.

(STEWART, 1801.)

LAMENT him, Mauchline husbands a',	all
He <i>often</i> did assist ye ;	often
For had ye staid <i>hale</i> weeks awa,	whole
Your wives they <i>ne'er</i> had miss'd ye.	never

Ye Mauchline <i>bairns</i> , as on ye press	children
To school in bands <i>thegither</i> ,	together
O tread ye lightly on his grass,—	
Perhaps he was your father !	

[In the above lampoon upon "fiscal Smith," and libel on the matrons of Mauchline, we see the nature of the "cases" that were usually brought before the solemn "Court" assembled in the Whitefoord Arms. The poet, in his fine "Epistle to J. S.," describes his friend as of "*scrimpet* stature," but of scanty manly configuration and character.]

ADAM ARMOUR'S PRAYER.

(HOGG AND MOTHERWELL'S ED., 1834.)

GUDE pity me, because I'm little !	G-d
For though I am an elf o' mettle,	
An' can, like <i>ony wabster's</i> shuttle,	any weaver's
<i>Jink</i> there or here,	move nimbly
Yet, scarce as <i>lang's</i> a gude <i>kail-whittle</i> ,	tall }
I'm <i>unco</i> queer.	kale-knife }
	uncommon

An' now 'Thou kens our woefu' case ;
 For Geordie's "*jurr*" we're in disgrace, journey-woman

Because we “stang’d” * her through the place,
 An’ hurt her *spleuchan*; purse of skin }
 For *whilk* we *daurna* show our face which dare not
 Within the *clachan*. village

An’ now we’re *dernd* in dens and hollows, lying hid
 And hunted, as was William Wallace,
 Wi’ constables—*thae* blackguard fallows— these
 An’ *sodgers baith*; soldiers also
 But Gude preserve us *frae* the gallows, from
 That shamefu’ death!

Auld grim black-bearded Geordie’s *sel* — self
 O shake him *owre* the mouth o’ hell! over
 There let him *hing*, an’ roar, an’ yell hang
 Wi’ hideous *din*, noise
 And if he offers to rebel,
 Then heave him in.

When Death comes in wi’ glimmerin *blink*, glance
 An’ tips auld *drucken Nanse*† the wink, drunken Nancy
 May Sautan gie her *doup* a *clink* bottom hasty set-down
 Within his *yett*, gate
 An fill her up wi’ brimstone drink,
 Red-reekin *het*. hot

Though *Jock* an’ *hav’rel* Jean ‡ are merry— Jack }
half-witted }
 Some devil seize them in a hurry,
 An’ waft them in th’ infernal wherry
 Straught through the lake, straight
 An’ *gie* their hides a noble curry give
 Wi’ oil of aik! §

* “Riding the stang” was a kind of lynch law, executed against obnoxious persons, by carrying them shoulder-high through the village astride a rail.—J. H.

† Geordie’s wife.

‡ Geordie’s son and daughter.

§ Curry their hides with an oak-stick.—J. H.

As for the "jurr"—*puir* worthless body ! poor
 She's got mischief enough already ;
 Wi' *stanget* hips, and buttocks bluidy, stang-ridden
 She's suffer'd sair ;
 But may she wintle in a woody, *
 If she wh—e mair !

[This very free production was first printed in the Edinburgh Magazine of January, 1808. Although the poem may not be entitled to rank with the author's higher efforts in the same style, yet few readers will be inclined to dispute that it fairly establishes its own paternity. It is certainly one of a group of hasty comic effusions dashed off by Burns at this period in connection with the Whitefoord Arms conventions already spoken of. The parents of Jean Armour lived at the back of the Inn ; but Adam Armour, who is the subject of the present poem, was in no way related to her. The "Geordie" of the piece was another Mauchline innkeeper, whose "jurr," or female servant, had committed some sexual error that caused a kind of "hue and cry" against her among the neighbors. Thus encouraged, a band of reckless young fellows, with Adam Armour for a ringleader, "rade the stang" upon the poor sinner. Geordie, who sympathised with his "jurr," resented this lawless outrage, and got criminal proceedings raised against the perpetrators. Adam Armour, who was an ill-made little fellow of some determination, had to abscond, and during his wanderings he happened to fall in with Burns, who, after commiserating the little outlaw, conceived the "Prayer" here put into his lips.]

THE JOLLY BEGGARS: A CANTATA.

(STEWART AND MEIKLE'S TRACTS, 1799.)

Recitativo.

WHEN *lyart* leaves bestrow the *yird*,^{withered} earth
 Or wavering like the bauckie-bird,†
 Bedim cauld Boreas' blast ;
 When hailstones drive wi' bitter *skyte*,<sup>slanting }
stroke }</sup>

* Wriggle in a halter, properly in a halter made of withes.—J. H.

† The old Scotch name for the bat.—R. B.

And infant frosts begin to bite,
 In hoary *cranreuch* drest ; hoar-frost
 Ae night at e'en a merry *core* party
 O' *randie*, *gangrel bodies*, reckless vagrant folks
 In Poosie-Nansie's held the *splore*, carousal
 To drink their *orra duddies* : superfluous rags
 Wi' quaffing and laughing,
 They *ranted* an' they sang, frolicked noisily
 Wi' jumping an' thumping,
 The vera girdle * rang.

First, *niest* the fire, in *auld* red rags, next old
 Ane sat, weel brac'd wi' mealy bags,†
 And knapsack a' in order ;
 His *doxy* lay within his arm ; mistress
 Wi' *usquebae* an' blankets warm whisky
 She *blinket* on her sodger : looked amorously
 An' ay he gies the *tozie* drab fuddled
 The *tither skelpin* kiss, other noisy
 While she held up her greedy *gab*, mouth
 Just like an aumous dish :‡
 Ilk smack still did crack still,
 Just like a cadger's § whip ;
 Then staggering an' swaggering,
 He roar'd this ditty up—

* A circular iron plate used in Scotland for baking oat-meal cakes and "scones" on over the fire ; a griddle. It is by no means sonorous ; so from its ringing one may judge of the riotous character of the "splore."—J. H.

† See note following.

‡ Alms-dish : the Scottish beggars used to carry a large wooden dish for the reception of such alms as they received in the form of cooked food. They still more commonly carried a bag, called a meal-poke, to contain the handfuls of oat-meal which was given them in place of money.—J. H.

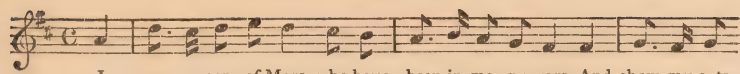
§ The cadger was a hawker, who travelled the country with a horse or ass, carrying two panniers loaded with merchandise. The term came to be applied to any one who drove a cart regularly for hire ; as, a *coal-cadger*.—J. H.



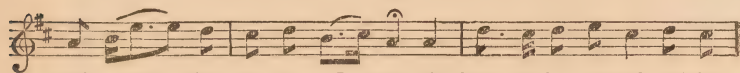
The Jolly Beggars.

"I AM A SON OF MARS,
WHO HAVE BEEN IN MANY WARS."

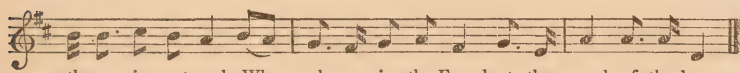
AIR.



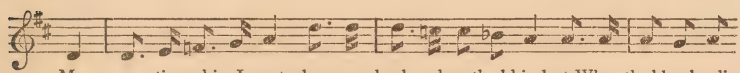
I am a son of Mars, who have been in ma - ny wars, And show my cuts



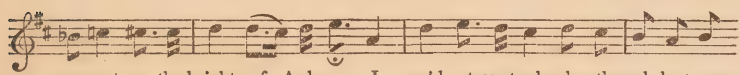
and scars wher - ev - er I come; This here was for a wench, and that



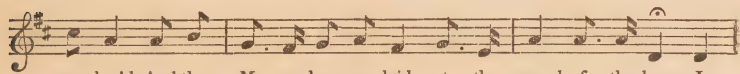
oth - er in a trench, When wel - com - ing the French at the sound of the drum.



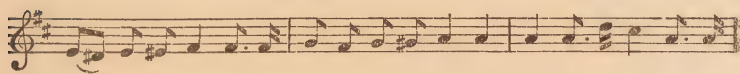
My pren - tice - ship I past where my lead - er breathed his last, When the blood - y die



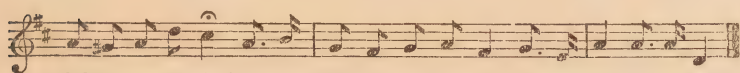
was cast on the heights of A - bram: I serv'd out my trade when the gal - lant game



was play'd, And the Mo - ro low was laid at the sound of the drum: I



served out my trade when the gal - lant game was play'd, I served out my trade when the



gal - lant game was play'd, And the Mo - ro low was laid at the sound of the drum.

Tune.—"Soldier's Joy."

I am a son of Mars who have been in many wars,
And show my cuts and scars wherever I come;
This here was for a wench, and that other in a trench,
When welcoming the French at the sound of the drum.

Lal de daudle, &c.

L

K

My prenticeship I past where my leader breath'd his
last,

When the bloody die was cast on the heights of
Abram :*

And I servèd out my trade when the gallant game
was play'd,

And the Moro† low was laid at the sound of the
drum.

I lastly was with Curtis among the floating batt'ries,‡
And there I left for witness an arm and a limb ;
Yet let my country need me, with Elliot§ to lead
me,

I'd clatter on my stumps at the sound of a drum.

And now tho' I must beg, with a wooden arm and
leg,

And many a tatter'd rag hanging over my bum,
I'm as happy with my wallet, my bottle and my
callet, trull

As when I used in scarlet to follow a drum.

What tho', with hoary locks, I must stand the winter
shocks,

Beneath the woods and rocks, oftentimes for a
home,

When the tother bag I sell,|| and the tother bottle
tell,

I could meet a troop of hell, at the sound of a
drum.

* The battle-ground in front of Quebec, where Wolfe victoriously fell in September, 1759.

† El Moro was the castle that defended the harbor of Santiago, a small island near the southern coast of Cuba. It was taken by the British in 1762, after which Havanna surrendered.—J. H.

‡ The destruction of the famous Spanish floating batteries, during the famous siege in 1782, on which occasion Captain Curtis signalized himself.

§ G. A. Elliot (Lord Heathfield), who defended Gibraltar during a siege of three years.

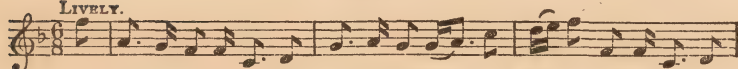
|| Bag of oatmeal collected by begging and sold for whisky.—J. H.

Recitativo.

He ended ; and the *kebars sheuk*, rafters shook
Aboon the chorus roar ; above
While frightened *rattons* backward *leuk*, rats look
An' seek the *benmost bore* : innermost hole
A fairy fiddler frae the *neuk*, nook
He skirl'd out, encore !
But up arose the martial *chuck*, hen
An' laid the loud uproar.

AIR.

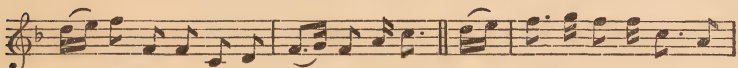
LIVELY.



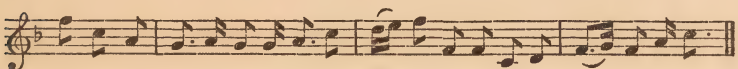
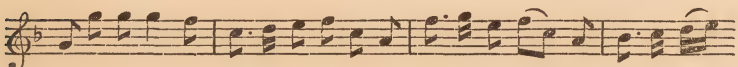
I once was a maid, though I can-not tell when, And still my de-light is in



pro-per young men; Some one of a troop of dra-goons was my dad-die, No



won-der I'm fond of a sod-ger lad-die. Sing lal de dal, &c.

*Tune.*—"Sodger Laddie."

I once was a maid, tho' I cannot tell when,
And still my delight is in proper young men :
Some one of a troop of dragoons was my daddie,
No wonder I'm fond of a sodger laddie.
Sing, lal de dal, &c.

The first of my loves was a swaggering blade.
To rattle the thundering drum was his trade ;

His leg was so tight, and his cheek was so ruddy,
'Transported I was with my sodger laddie.

But the godly old chaplain left him in the lurch ;
'The sword I forsook for the sake of the church :
He ventur'd the soul, and I *risked* the body, risked
'Twas then I prov'd false to my sodger laddie.

Full soon I grew sick of my sanctified sot,
The regiment at large for a husband I got ;
From the gilded spontoon to the fife I was ready,
I askèd no more but a sodger laddie.

But the peace it reduc'd me to beg in despair,
Till I met my old boy in a Cunningham * fair ;
His rags regimental they flutter'd so gaudy,
My heart it rejoic'd at a sodger laddie.

And now I have liv'd—I know not how long,
And still I can join in a cup and a song ;
But whilst with both hands I can hold the glass
 steady,
Here's to thee, my hero, my sodger laddie.

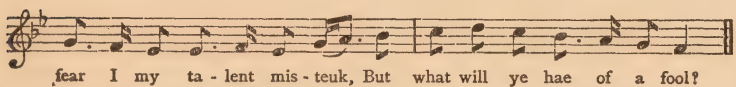
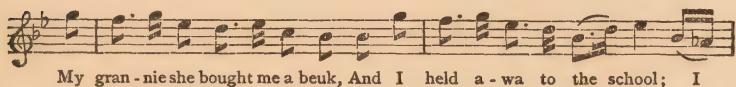
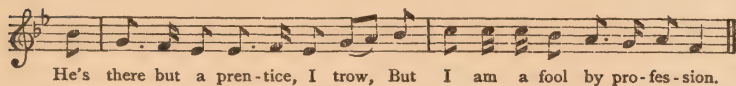
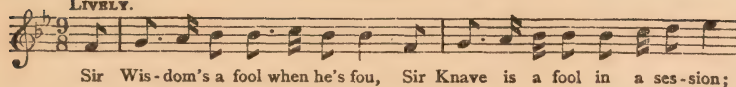
Recitativo.

[Poor Merry-Andrew, in the <i>neuk</i> ,	corner
Sat guzzling wi' a <i>tinkler-hizzie</i> ;	tinker wench
They mind't na wha the chorus <i>teuk</i>	took
Between themselves they were sae busy :	
At length, wi' drink an' courtin dizzy,	
He <i>stoiter'd</i> up an' made a face ;	staggered
Then turn'd, an' laid a <i>smack</i> on <i>Grizzie</i> ,	kiss Grace
Syne tun'd his pipes wi' grave grimace.	

* Cunningham fair was held at Stewarton, near Kilmarnock.

AIR.

LIVELY.



Tune—"Auld Sir Symon."

Sir Wisdom's a fool when he's *fou*; full (*drunk*)

Sir Knave is a fool in a session;*

He's there but a prentice I trow,

But I am a fool by profession.

My *grannie* she bought me a *beuk*, grand-dam }
book }

An' I held awa to the school;

I fear I my talent *misteuk*, mistook

But what will ye *hae* of a fool? have

For drink I would venture my neck;

A *hizzie's* the half of my craft; wench

But what could ye other expect,

Of ane that's avowedly *daft*? crazy

I ance was tyed up like a *stirk*,† yearling steer

For civilly swearing and quaffing;

* Apparently, when being tried for some offence.

† This refers to the punishment of the "Jougs," an iron collar padlocked round a culprit's neck in a public thoroughfare.

I ance was abus'd i' the kirk,
 For *touzing* a lass i' my *daffin*. in
 rumpling }
 frolicsomeness }

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport,
 Let naebody name wi' a jeer ;
 There's even, I'm *tauld*, i' the Court told
 A tumbler ca'd the Premier.

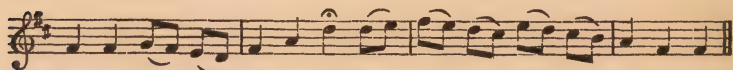
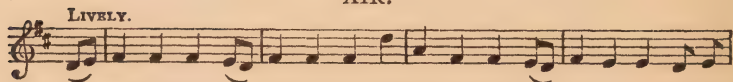
Observ'd ye yon reverend lad
 Mak faces to tickle the mob ;
 He rails at our mountebank squad,—
 It's rivalship just i' the job.

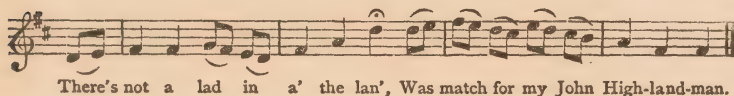
And now my conclusion I'll tell,
 For faith I'm confoundedly dry ;
 The chiel that's a fool for himsel,
 Guid L—d ! he's far dafter than I.]

Recitativo.

Then niest outspak a *raucle carlin* stout beldam
 Wha kent fu' weel to *cleek* the sterlin ; clutch }
 (steal) }
 For mony a pursie she had hookèd,
 An' had in mony a well been *doukèd* : ducked
 Her love had been a Highland laddie,
 But weary fa' the waefu' *woodie* ; gibbet-halter
 Wi' sighs an' sobs she thus began
 To wail her *braw* John Highlandman. brave

AIR.





Tune.—"O an ye were dead, Guidman."

A Highland lad my love was born,
 The *lalland* laws he held in scorn ; lowland
 But he still was faithfu' to his clan,
 My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

Chorus.

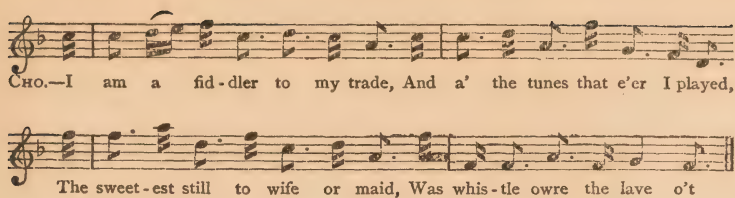
Sing hey my braw John Highlandman !
 Sing ho my braw John Highlandman !
 There's not a lad in a' the lan'
 Was match for my John Highlandman.

With his *philibeg* an' tartan plaid, kilt
 An' guid *claymore* down by his side, broadsword
 The ladies' hearts he did trepan,
 My gallant, braw John Highlandman.
Sing hey, &c.

We rangèd a' from Tweed to Spey,*
 An' liv'd like lords an' ladies gay ;
 For a *lalland* face he fearèd none,— lowland
 My gallant, braw John Highlandman.
Sing hey, &c.

They banish'd him beyond the sea,
 But ere the bud was on the tree,
 Adown my cheeks the pearls ran,
 Embracing my John Highlandman.
Sing hey, &c.

* Tweed separates Scotland from England ; Spey is a river in Inverness-shire.
 The phrase means from South to North of Scotland.—J. H.



Tune—"Whistle owre the lave o't."

Let me *ryke* up to *digit* that tear reach wipe
An' go wi' me an' be my dear;
An' then your every care an' fear
May whistle owre the *lave o't*.* rest of it

Chorus.

I am a fiddler to my trade,
An' a' the tunes that e'er I play'd,
The sweetest still to wife or maid,
Was whistle owre the lave o't.

At *kirns* an' weddins *we'se* be there ^{harvest-homes} }
An' O sae nicely's we will fare ! ^{we shall} }
We'll *bowse* about till Daddie Care ^{carouse}
Sing whistle owre the lave o't.
I am, &c.

Sae merrily's the *banes* we'll *pyke*, ^{bones} pick
An' sun oursells about the *dyke*; ^{earth or stone fence}
An' at our leisure, when ye like,
We'll whistle owre the lave o't.
I am, &c.

But bless me wi' your heav'n o' charms,
An' while I kittle hair on thairms,†
Hunger, *could*, an' a' sic harms, ^{cold}
May whistle owre the lave o't.
I am, &c.

* A popular Scotch air. His meaning is: grant my prayer, and then you can regard all else with indifference.—J. H.

† Tickle the horse-hair of the bow on catgut.

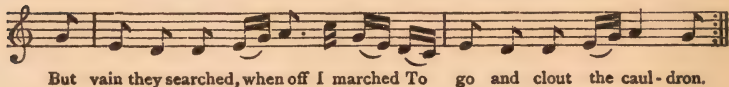
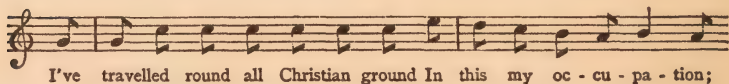
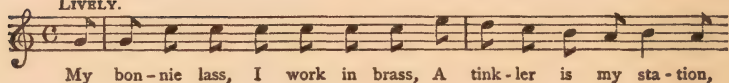
Recitativo.

Her charms had struck a sturdy caird,*
 As weel as poor gut-scraper ;
 He tak's the fiddler by the beard,
 An' draws a *roosty* rapier— rusty
 He *swoor* by a' was swearing worth, swore all
 To speet him like a *pliver*, plover for roasting
 Unless he would from that time forth
 Relinquish her for ever.

Wi' ghastly *e'e*, poor tweedle-dee eye
 Upon his *hunkers* bended haunches
 An' pray'd for grace wi' ruefu' face,
 An' so the quarrel ended.
 But tho' his little heart did grieve
 When round the tinkler prest her,
 He feign'd to *snirtle* in his sleeve, laugh furtively
 When thus the caird address'd her :

AIR.

LIVELY.



* Cairds were travelling tinkers or horn spoon-makers, and generally gipsies and thieves.—J. H.

Tune—"Clout the Cauldron."

My bonie lass, I work in brass,
 A tinkler is my station ;
 I've travel'd round all Christian ground
 In this my occupation ;
 I've *taen* the gold, an' been enrolled taken
 In many a noble squadron ; *
 But vain they search'd when off I march'd
 To go an' *clout* the cauldron. patch
I've taen the gold, &c.

Despise that shrimp, that wither'd imp.
 With a' his noise an' cap'rin ;
 An' take a share with those that bear
 The *budget* and the apron ! tool-bag
 And by that *stowp*! my faith an' *houp* flagon hope
 And by that dear Kilbagie, †
 If e'er ye want, or meet wi' *scant*, short commons
 May I ne'er weet my *craigie*. throat
And by that stowp, &c.

Recitativo.

The caird prevail'd—th' unblushing fair
 In his embraces sunk ;
 Partly wi' love o'ercome *sae sair*, so sore
 An' partly she was drunk :
 Sir Violino, with an air
 That show'd a man o' *spunk*, mettle
 Wish'd unison between the pair,
 An' made the bottle clunk ‡
To their health that night.

* He was a bounty-jumper.—J. H.

† A peculiar sort of whisky so called, a great favorite with Poesie Nansie's clubs.—R. B. So named from Kilbagie distillery, in Clackmannan-shire.


‡ Onomatopoeic, for the gurgling sound made in pouring out liquor.—J. H.

But <i>hurchin</i> Cupid shot a shaft,	urchin
That play'd a dame a <i>shavie</i> —	trick
The fiddler rak'd her, fore and aft,	
Behint the <i>chicken covie</i> .	hen coop
Her lord, a wight of Homer's craft,*	
Tho' limpin wi' the <i>spavie</i> ,	spavin
He <i>hirpl'd</i> up, an' lap <i>like daft</i> limped	as if crazy
An' <i>shor'd</i> them Dainty Davie †	sang
O' <i>boot</i> that night.	to boot

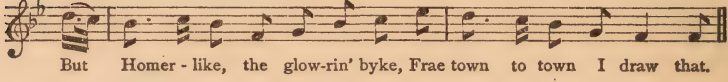
He was a care-defying blade
 As ever Bacchus listed !
 Tho' Fortune *sair* upon him laid sore
 His heart, she ever miss'd it.
 He had no wish but—to be glad,
 Nor want but—when he thristed ;
 He hated nought but—to be sad,
 An' thus the muse suggested
 His sang that night.

AIR.

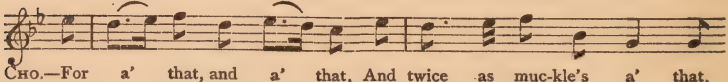
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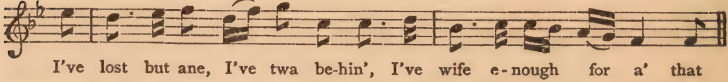
I am a bard of no re-gard Wi' gen-tle folks and a' that;



But Homer-like, the glow-rin' byke, Frae town to town I draw that.



CHO.—For a' that, and a' that, And twice as muc-kle's a' that,



I've lost but ane, I've twa be-hin', I've wife e-nough for a' that

* Homer is allowed to be the oldest ballad-singer on record.—R. B.

† A popular Scotch air and song.

Tune.—"For a' that, an' a' that."

I am a Bard of no regard,
 Wi' gentle folks an' a' that;
 But Homer-like, the *glowrin byke*, staring through
Frae town to town I draw that. from

Chorus.

For a' that an' a' that,
 An' twice as *muckle's* a' that; much
 I've lost but ane, I've twa behin',
 I've wife eneugh for a' that.

I never drank the Muses' *stank*, pool or fountain
 Castalia's burn, an' a' that:
 But there it streams an' richly reams,
 My Helicon I ca' that.*
 For a' that, &c.

Great love I bear to a' the fair,
 Their humble slave an' a' that;
 But lordly will, I hold it still
 A mortal sin to *thraw* that. thwart
 For a' that, &c.

In raptures sweet, this hour we meet,
 Wi' mutual love and' a' that;
 But for how lang the *flie may stang* fancy }
 may last }
 Let inclination law that.
 For a' that, &c.

Their tricks an' craft hae put me *daft*, crazy
 They've *taen* me in, an' a' that; taken
 But clear your decks, an' here's the Sex!
 I like the *jads* for a' that. jades

* We must here imagine the singer to pour out his beer with jovial *abandon*.
 —J. H.

For a' that an' a' that,
 An' twice as muckle's a' that ;
 My dearest bluid, to do them guid,
 They're welcome till't for a' that.

Recitativo.

So sung the bard—and Nansies *wa's* walls
 Shook with a thunder of applause,
 Re-echo'd from each mouth !
 They toom'd their pocks,* they pawn'd their
duds rags of clothing
 They scarcely left to *coor* their *fuds*, cover hips
 To quench their *lowin* drouth : flaming
 Then *owre* again, the jovial thrang once more
 The poet did request
 To *lowse* his pack an' *wale* a sang; loose choose
 A ballad o' the best :
 He rising, rejoicing,
 Between his twa Deborahs,
 Looks round him, an' found them
 Impatient for the chorus.

AIR.

LIVELY.

See the smok-ing bowl be-fore us, mark our jov-ial rag-ged ring!

Round and round take up the cho-rus, And in rap-tures let us sing,

CHO.—A fig for those, a fig for those by law pro-tect-ed! Liber-ty's a glor-ious

feast, li-ber-ty's a glor-i-ous feast! Courts for cowards were e-rect-ed, Churches

built to please the -priest, chur-ches built, chur-ches built to please the priest.

* Emptied their meal-bags for drink.—J. H.

Tune.—"Jolly Mortals fill your Glasses."

See the smoking bowl before us,
Mark our jovial, ragged ring !
Round and round take up the chorus,
And in raptures let us sing—

Chorus.

A fig for those by law protected !
Liberty's a glorious feast !
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

What is title, what is treasure,
What is reputation's care ?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter how or where !
A fig for, &c.

With the ready trick and fable,
Round we wander all the day ;
And at night, in barn or stable,
Hug our *doxies* on the hay.
A fig for, &c.

sweethearts

Does the train-attended carriage
'Thro' the country lighter rove ?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love ?
A fig for, &c.

Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes ;
Let them cant about decorum,
Who have character to lose.
A fig for, &c.

Here's to budgets, bags and wallets !
Here's to all the wandering train,

Here's our ragged *brats* and *callets*, children trulls
One and all cry out, Amen !

Chorus.

A fig for those by law protected !
Liberty's a glorious feast !
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

[That this extraordinary work of minstrel-art was composed before the close of 1785, is evident from John Richmond's account of it furnished to Robert Chambers. One night after a meeting held at John Dow's, the poet, in the company of James Smith and Richmond, ventured into a very noisy assemblage of vagrants, who were making merry in a "hedge alehouse," kept by a Mrs. Gibson, known by the sobriquet of "Poozie" or "Poozie Nancy." After witnessing a little of the rough jollity there, the three young men left; and in the course of a few days, Burns recited a part of the poem to Richmond, who reported that, to the best of his recollection, it contained songs by a *Sweep* and by a *Sailor*, which do not appear in the finished cantata. About Martinmas, 1785, Richmond removed to Edinburgh, taking with him a portion of the cantata, which the poet had presented to him,—namely, that part which we have marked off with brackets.

The "Jolly Beggars" was first published in Stewart and Meikle's Tracts, 1799, without the portion which had thus been given to Richmond. It was republished by Thomas Stewart, of Glasgow, in 1801, and again in 1802, embracing the *recitativo* and song of "Merry Andrew," which had in the meantime been supplied by Richmond. The manuscript thus completed was published in fac-simile by Lumsden, of Glasgow, in 1823, with consent of Stewart, who was then the owner of it. The preface to that facsimile contains the following statement: "The manuscript was given by the poet himself to Mr. David Woodburn, at that time factor to Mr. M'Adam, of Craigengillan, and by Mr. Woodburn to Mr. Robert M'Limont, merchant in Glasgow, from whom it passed into the possession of Mr. Smith, of Greenock, who gave it to the present possessor."

The original MS. is now (1876) the property of Mr. Gilbert Burns, of Knockmaroon Lodge, County Dublin, nephew of the poet, who purchased it (along with some other manuscripts) for fifty guineas. On the fly-leaf of the bound volume is a memorandum by a daughter of Mr. Stewart, residing in the Azores, stating that her father's uncle, Mr. Richmond, the poet's early friend, gave Mr. Stewart the MS. On another leaf is written—"This manuscript

belongs to David Crichton, junior, Pictou, Nova Scotia, North America. Purchased at Terceira, one of the Azores, or Western Islands, 13th January, 1845."

From the foregoing account, it would appear that, while Woodburn, in 1786, obtained possession of the main poem, a small portion of it, which is really inferior in quality to the rest, seems to have been purposely omitted by the author, when he stitched up the manuscript and handed it to Woodburn. That rejected part had been given to Richmond, who, in 1801, presented it to his nephew, Mr. Stewart, to complete the cantata which that gentleman had obtained from Mr. Smith, of Greenock. (Naturally, in Mr. Stewart's family, there would be more talk of the present made to him by his uncle than of that by Mr. Smith, and Mr. Stewart's daughter might easily have believed the whole MS. came from her grand-uncle.—J. H.) That this is the correct way of reconciling any apparent discrepancies in stating the pedigree of this unique manuscript, is manifest on examining the original: the long dismembered portion is written on one sheet, in a larger character, in a different tint of ink, and apparently on a different quality of paper.

It is a remarkable fact that Cromek (who, in 1810, published a copy of the Jolly Beggars from the original MS., lent by Mr. Stewart for the purpose), having heard from Mr. Richmond that a Sailor had originally formed one of the persons in the poet's drama, actually took upon him to introduce a Sailor, at that part of the last *recitativo* but one, where the Fiddler relieves the Bard of one of his Deborahs, thus,—

"But hurchin Cupid shot a shaft,
That play'd a dame a shavie;
'A Sailor raked her fore and aft," &c.

Cromek used other liberties with the text which we need not farther refer to; but the public is now put in possession of the whole history of this wonderful poem.]

SONG—FOR A' THAT.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1790.)

THO' women's minds, like winter winds,
May shift, and turn, an' a' that,
The noblest breast adores them *maist*—
A consequence I draw that.

most

L.

L.

Chor.—For a' that an' a' that,
 And twice as *meikle's* a' that; much
 'The bonie lass that I *loe* best love
 She'll be my *ain* for a' that. own

Great love I bear to a' the fair,
 Their humble slave, an' a' that;
 But lordly will, I hold it still
 A mortal sin to *thraw* that. thwart
 For a' that, &c.

But there is ane *aboon* the *lave*, above rest
 Has wit, and sense, an' a' that;
 A bonie lass, I like her best,
 And wha a crime dare *ca'* that? call
 For a' that, &c.

In rapture sweet this hour we meet,
 Wi' mutual love an' a' that,
 But for how lang the *flie may stang*, fancy may last
 Let inclination law that.
 For a' that, &c.

Their tricks an' craft *hae* put me daft, have
 They've *taen me in* an' a' that; deceived me
 But clear your decks, and—here's 'The sex!'
 I like the *jads* for a' that. hussies
 For a' that, &c.

[This composition is an altered version of the Bard's first song in the "Jolly Beggars." The first and third stanzas here given are wanting in the other version, and the two opening stanzas of the song in the Jolly Beggars are here omitted. Verse third of the text first appeared in Pickering's ed., 1839. We shall next proceed to give what seems to have been the poet's first intention as a song for the "sturdy caird" in the same cantata, and withdrawn in favor of that already given.]

SONG—KISSIN MY KATIE.

(JOHNSON'S MUSEUM, 1790.)

Tune—"The bob o' Dumblane."

O MERRY *hae* I been teethin a *heckle*, have }
flax-dressers' comb }
 An' merry *hae* I been shapin a spoon;
 O merry *hae* I been *cloutin* a kettle, mending
 An' kissin my Katie when a' was done.*
 O a' the lang day I *ca'* at my hammer, all day long drive
 An' a' the lang day I whistle and sing;
 O a' the lang night I *cuddle* my *kimmer*, fondle girl
 An' a' the lang night as happy's a king.

Bitter in *dool* I *lickit* my *winnins* grief eat fruit of }
earnings }
 O' marrying Bess, to gie her a slave: †
 Blest be the hour she *cool'd* in her *linnens*, grew cold }
shroud }
 And *blythe* be the bird that sings on her grave! merry
 Come to my arms, my Katie, my Katie;
 O come to my arms and kiss me again!
Drucken or sober, here's to thee Katie: drunk
 An' blest be the day I did it again.

[The operations described in the first stanza are all those of the tinker. It is supposed that this song was intended to be made use of in the "Jolly Beggars," and was afterwards thrown aside for the more suitable one put into the caird's lips—"My bonie lass, I work in brass."]

* We have here a terse vidimus of the different occupations of a travelling caird. He replaces teeth in a flax-dresser's comb; he makes spoons from rams' and cows' horns; he tinkers dilapidated kettles and other metal vessels; and in the evening gives himself up to sensual pleasure.—J. H.

† In bitter sorrow I expiated my folly in marrying Bess, and thus becoming her slave.—J. H.

His wee bit *ingle*, *blinkin bonilie*, fire glancing }
cheerfully }
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lispin infant, prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary *kiaugh* and care¹ beguile, carking anxiety
And makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in, by and by
At service out, amang the farmers *roun*; around
Some *ca'* the pleugh, some herd, some *tentie rin* drive }
A *cannie* errand to a neibor town: attentively }
Their eldest hope, their *Jenny*, woman-grown, easy
In youthfu' bloom—love sparkling in her *e'e* Janet
Comes hame; perhaps, to shew a *braw* new eye
fine
gown,

Or deposite her *sair-won penny-fee*, hard wages
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's welfare kindly *spiers*: enquires
The social hours, swift-winged, unnotic'd fleet;
Each tells the *uncos* that he sees or hears. strange things
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view;

The mother, wi' her needle and her *sheers*, scissors
Gars auld *claes* look *amaist* as weel's the makes clothes }
new; almost }

The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's and their mistress's command,
The *younkers* a' are warned to obey; youngsters
And mind their labors wi' an *eydent* hand, diligent
And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to *jauk* or play; loaf
"And O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
And mind your duty, duly, morn and night;
Lest in temptation's path ye *gang* astray, go
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord
aright."

But hark ! a rap comes gently to the door ;
 Jenny, wha *kens* the meaning o' the same, *knows* of
 Tells how a neibor lad came o'er the moor,
 To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
 The wily mother sees the conscious flame
 Sparkle in Jenny's *e'e*, and flush her cheek ; *eye*
 With heart-struck anxious care, enquires his name,
 While Jenny *hafflins* is afraid to speak ; *half*
 Weel-pleas'd the mother hears, it's nae wild,
 worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him *ben*,* *in*
 A strappin' youth, he takes the mother's eye ;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no *ill ta'en* ; glad taken amiss
 The father *cracks* of horses, *pleugh*s, and chats *ploughs*
eye. *cows*
 The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
 But *blate* an' *laithfu'*, scarce can weel behave ; bashful timid
 The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
 What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave ;
 Weel-pleas'd to think her *bairn's* respected like *child*
the lave. *others of her sex*

O happy love ! where love like this is found :
 O heart-felt raptures ! bliss beyond compare !
 I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
 And sage experience bids me this declare,—
 “ If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare—
 One cordial in this melancholy vale,
 'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
 In other's arms, breathe out the tender tale,
 Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening
 gale.†”

* See p. 47.

† “ If anything on earth deserves the name of rapture or transport, it is the feeling of green eighteen in the company of the mistress of his heart, when she repays him with an equal return of affection.”—*Common-place Book*, April, 1783.

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch ! a villain ! lost to love and truth !
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth ?
Curse on his perjur'd arts ! dissembling, smooth !
Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exil'd ?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child ?
Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction
wild ?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The *halesome parritch*, chief of Scotia's wholesome oatmeal }
food ; porridge }

The sowpe* their only *hawkie* does afford, cow
That, 'yont the *hallan* snugly chows her beyond partition
cood : cud

The dame brings forth, in complimentary mood,
To grace the lad, her *weel-hain'd kebbuck* carefully saved,
fell; pungent cheese
And aft he's prest, and aft he *ca's* it guid: calls
The frugal wife, garrulous, will tell
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell. +

The cheerfu' supper done, *wi'* serious face, with
 They, round the *ingle*, form a circle wide ; fireside
 The sire turns o'er with patriarchal grace,
 The big *ha'-bible*,[†] *ance* his father's pride : hall-bible once
 His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
 His *lyart haffets* wearin thin and bare ; gray temples
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
 He *wales* a portion with judicious care ; selects
 And "Let us worship God !" he says with solemn air.

* Any liquid supped with a spoon ; here it means milk. The Scotch phrase, "Bite and Sowpe" is equivalent to the English "Bit and Sup."—J. H.

† How it was a twelvemonth old since flax was in bloom.—J. H.

¶ In every Scotch family there is a large quarto or folio Bible, which comes down as a family-loom from sire to son, and is used besides as a register of births and deaths. The first purchase a young couple makes (if they have not inherited one) is a family Bible.—J. H.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise,
 They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim ;
 Perhaps 'Dundee's' * wild-warbling measures rise,
 Or plaintive 'Martyrs,' * worthy of the name ;
 Or noble 'Elgin' * *beets* the heaven-ward flame, ^{fans}
 The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays :
 Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame ;
 The tickl'd ears no heartfelt raptures raise ;
Nae unison *hae* they, with our Creator's praise. ^{no} ^{have}

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
 How Abram was the friend of God on high ;
 Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
 With Amalek's ungracious progeny ;
 Or, how the royal bard did groaning lie
 Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire ;
 Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry ;
 Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire ;
 Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
 How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed ;
 How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
 Had not on earth whereon to lay his head :
 How His first followers and servants sped ;
 The precepts sage they wrote to many a land :
 How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
 Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
 And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounc'd by
 Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,
 The saint, the father, and the husband prays :
 Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"†

* Names of favorite Scottish psalm tunes.—J. H.

† Pope's "Windsor Forest."—R. B.

The Cotters Saturday Night

AND "LET US WORSHIP GOD;" HE SAYS WITH SOLEMN AIR



That thus they all shall meet in future days,
 There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
 No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
 Together hymning their Creator's praise,
 In such society, yet still more dear ;
 While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride,
 In all the pomp of method, and of art ;
 When men display to congregations wide
 Devotion's every grace, except the heart !
 The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
 The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole ;
 But haply, in some cottage far apart,
 May hear, well-pleas'd, the language of the soul ;
 And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way ;
 The youngling cottagers retire to rest :
 The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
 And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
 That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
 And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
 Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
 For them and for their little ones provide ;
 But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
 That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad :
 Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,*
 "An honest man's the noblest work of God ;"†
 And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,

* "Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
 A breath can make them, as a breath has made."

GOLDSMITH'S *Deserted Village*.

† Pope. *Essay on Man*.

The cottage leaves the palace far behind ;
What is a lordling's pomp ? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined !

O Scotia ! my dear, my native soil !
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content !
And O ! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile !
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd isle.

O Thou ! who pour'd the patriotic tide,
That stream'd thro' Wallace's undaunted heart,²
Who dar'd to, nobly, stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part :
(The patriot's God, peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward !)
O never, never Scotia's realm desert ;
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard !

[That this poem was composed near the close of 1785, is proved by the author's words in his letter to John Richmond, 17th February, 1786. In that letter, the titles are given of five very important poems, including "The Cotter's Saturday Night," which, "among several others," he had composed since Richmond left Mauchline. Lockhart has well said — "'The Cotter's Saturday Night' is perhaps, of all Burns' pieces, the one whose exclusion from the collection, were such things possible now-a-days, would be most injurious, if not to the genius, at least to the character of the man."

The MS. copy of this poem, used by the printer of the Kilmarnock edition of his poems, is now at Irvine, carefully preserved by the Burns Club there, along with several other manuscripts. A fac-simile of it was published by Mr. Maxwell Dick, of that town, in 1840. An earlier copy is that which was presented to

Allan Cunningham in 1834 by his publisher, Mr. James Cochrane, and is now in the British Museum, London.

The variations marked (1) and (2) were made by the author for his edition of 1793: the latter originally read "great, unhappy Wallace' heart," the change having been adopted to please Mrs. Dunlop. The expression "kiaugh and care" (1) was at the same time changed to "carking cares," to suit those who objected to the word "kiaugh" as being too antiquated. In our text, we adhere to the original words.]

The following is condensed from Allan Cunningham's very interesting note on this poem:—

When Burns was first invited to dine at Dunlop-house, a westlan dame, who acted as housekeeper, appeared to doubt the propriety of her mistress entertaining a mere ploughman who made rhymes, as if he were a gentleman of old descent. By way of convincing Mrs. M'Guistan, for that was her name, of the bard's right to such distinction, Mrs. Dunlop gave her "The Cotter's Saturday Night" to read. This was soon done: she returned the volume with a strong shaking of the head, saying, "Nae doubt gentlemen and ladies think mickle o' this, but for me it's naething but what I saw i' my father's house every day, and I dinna see how he could hae tauld it ony other way."

Of the origin of this poem, Gilbert Burns gives a clear account:—"Robert had frequently remarked to me that he thought there was something peculiarly venerable in the phrase, 'Let us worship God!' used by a decent, sober head of a family, introducing family worship. To this sentiment of the Author the world is indebted for 'The Cotter's Saturday Night.' Robert and I used frequently to walk together, when the weather was favorable, on the Sunday afternoons, and enjoyed such Sundays as would make one regret to see their number abridged. It was in one of these walks that I first heard him repeat 'The Cotter's Saturday Night.' I do not recollect to have read or heard anything by which I was more highly electrified. The fifth and sixth stanzas, and the eighteenth, thrilled with peculiar ecstasy through my soul." The household of the virtuous William Burness was the scene of the poem, and William himself was the saint, and father, and husband of this truly sacred drama.—J. H.

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

"O Prince! O chief of many thronèd pow'rs!
That led th' embattl'd seraphim to war—"

MILTON.

O THOU! whatever title suit thee—
Auld "Hornie," "Satan," "Nick," or "Cloutie,"*
Wha in *yon* cavern grim an' sootie, who yonder
 Clos'd under hatches,
Spairges about the brunstane cootie,† scatters
 To *scaud* poor wretches! scald

Hear me, auld "*Hangie*," for a wee, hangman
An' let poor damnèd bodies be;
I'm sure *sma'* pleasure it can *gie*, small give
 Ev'n to a deil,
To *skelp* an' *scaud* poor dogs like me, spank
 An' hear us squeel!

Great is thy pow'r an' great thy fame;
Far *kenn'd* an' notèd is thy name; known
An' tho' yon *lowin heugh's* thy hame, blazing pit's
 Thou travels far;
An' faith! thou's neither *lag* nor lame, laggard
 Nor *blate* nor *scaur*. bashful }
 apt to be scared }

Whyles, raging like a roaring lion, at times
For prey, *a'* holes an' corners tryin; all
Whyles, on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin,
 Tirlin the kirks; unroofing
Whyles, in the human bosom pryin,
 Unseen thou lurks.

* Some of the names given to the D—l in Scotland—*Hornie* from his horns; *cloutie* from his cloven feet or cloots.—J. H.

† The poet imagines a foot-pail, called in Scotland a *cootie*, filled with liquid brimstone, which Satan distributes over his victims.—J. H.

I've heard my rev'rend grannie say,
In *lanely* glens ye like to stray ; *lonely*
Or where auld ruin'd castles grey
 Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way,
 Wi' eldritch croon.*

When twilight did my *grannie* summon, grand-dame
To say her pray'rs *douce*, honest woman ! decent
Aft '*yont* the *dyke* she's heard you *bummin'*, beyond fence }
 Wi' eerie drone ; awe-producing buzzing }
Or, rustlin, thro' the *boortrees* comin, elder-trees
 Wi' heavy groan.

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,
The stars shot down wi' sklentín light, slanting
Wi' you mysel, I gat a fright,
Ayont the loch ; beyond
Ye, like a rash-buss, stood in sight, rush-bush
Wi' wavin sough dreary sighing }
 sound }

The cudgel in my *nieve* did shake, fist
 Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,
 When wi' an eldritch,† *stoor* "quaick, quaick," bass
 Amang the springs,
 Awa ye *squatter'd* like a drake, spluttered
 On whistlin wings.

Let *warlocks* grim, an' wither'd hags, male witches
Tell how wi' you, on ragweed nags,
They skim the *muirs* an' dizzy crags, moors
Wi' wicked speed ;
And in kirk-yards renew their leagues,
Owre howket dead. over resurrected

* With mysteriously awful hum. The word *eldritch* implies something supernatural and frightful.—J. H.

† See note on Stanza 5.

'Thence, countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
May plunge an' plunge the *kirn* in vain; churn
For oh ! the yellow treasures *taen* taken away
By witchin skill ;
An' *dawtet*, twal-pint *Hawkie's gane* petted cow gone
As *yell's* the *bill*.* dry bull

Thence, mystic knots mak great abuse
On young *guidmen*, fond, keen an' *croose*; husbands
self-confident }
When the best wark-lume i' the house,
By *cantraip wit*, magic slight
Is instant made *no* worth a louse, not
Just at the bit.

When *thowes* dissolve the snawy *hoord*, *thaws wreaths*
An' float the jinglin icy boord, †
Then, *water-kelpies* haunt the *foord*, *water-spirits foord*
By your direction,
And 'nighted trav'lers are allur'd
To their destruction.

And *aft* your moss-traversin "*Spunkies*" oft }
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is: will o' the wisps }
The *bleezin*, curst, mischievous monkies blazing
 Delude his eyes,
Till in some miry slough he sunk is,
 Ne'er mair to rise. never more }

When mason's mystic word an' grip
In storms an' tempests raise you up,

*She gave twelve Scotch pints or twenty-four English quarts a day. The cow is the most esteemed possession of the thrifty, well-doing Scotch peasant. It supplies the "sowpe of kitchen" for his and his family's porridge, and keeps them in butter and cheese. It and its products are therefore the favorite objects of attack by malicious witches, and the good wife is always on the watch against such.—J. H.

† The icy board is called jingling in allusion to the sound it gives out when curling-stones pass over it.—J. H.

Some cock or cat your rage *maun* stop, must
Or, strange to tell!
The youngest "brither" ye wad *whip* pick up and carry
Aff *straught* to hell. straight

Lang syne in Eden's bonie yard,
When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,
An' all the soul of love they shar'd,
The raptur'd hour,
Sweet on the fragrant flow'ry *swaird*,
In shady bow'r ;

[illegible]

D'ye mind that day when in a *bizz* bustle
 Wi' reeket duds, an' reestet gizz, †
 Ye did present your *smootie* phiz sooty
 '*Mang* better folk, among
 An' *sklented* on the man of Uzz squinted
 Your spitefu' joke? †

An' how he gat him i' your thrall,	in
An' <i>brak</i> him out o' house an' <i>hal'</i> ,	broke hold
While scabs an' <i>botches</i> did him gall,	blotches
Wi' bitter <i>claw</i> ;	scratching
An' <i>lows'd</i> his ill-tongu'd wicked <i>scaul</i> —	loosed }
Was warst <i>ava</i> ?	scolding wife }
	of all }

* Sneck-drawin': drawing the sneck or latch stealthily and with thievish purpose; hence, insidious deceitful, treacherous. See note on "Nick-scraping," p. 285.—J. H.

† With smoke stained rags and fire-shrivelled (literally roasted) face.—J. H.

† Job 1: 6-12.

of the name of Jean was made in the poem entitled "The Vision." He would have deleted "the adored name" from the "Epistle to Davie" also, we may be very certain, had it been possible to do so without seriously injuring it.

This "Address to the Deil" is one of the author's most popular pieces, and has been the theme of unmingled praise by critics. The poet's relenting tenderness, even towards the author and perpetual embodiment of evil, is a fine stroke at the close. "Humor and tenderness," says Dr. Currie, "are here so happily intermixed, that it is impossible to say which predominates."]

SCOTCH DRINK.

(KILMARNOCK ED., 1786.)

Give him strong drink until he wink, give
That's sinking in despair;
An' liquor guid to fire his bluid, good blood
That's prest wi' grief an' care:
There let him bouse, an' deep carouse, drink freely
Wi' bumpers flowing o'er,
Till he forgets his loves or debts,
An' minds his griefs no more.

SOLOMON'S PROVERBS, xxxi. 6, 7.

LET other poets raise a fracas
'Bout vines, an' wines, an' *drucken* Bacchus, drunken
An' crabbet names an' stories rack us,
An' grate our *lug*: ear
I sing the juice Scotch *bere* can mak us, barley
In glass or jug.*

O thou, my muse ! guid auld Scotch drink !
Whether thro' *wimplin* worms thou *jink*, winding steal
Or, richly brown, *ream* owre the brink, cream over
In glorious *faem*, foam
Inspire me, till I lisp an' wink,
To sing thy name !

* In the form of whisky or beer.

Let husky wheat the *haughs* adorn, holmes
An' *aits* set up their *awnie* horn, oats bearded
An' pease an' beans, at e'en or morn,
Perfume the plain :
Leeze me on thee, John Barleycorn, commend me to
Thou king o' grain !

On thee aft Scotland *chows her cood*, chews her cud
In *souple scones*,* the *wale o' food*! supple choice
Or tumblin in the boiling flood!
 Wi' kail an' beef; †
But when thou pours thy strong heart's blood,
 There thou shines chief.

Food fills the *wame*, an' keeps us *leevin'*; belly living
Tho' life's a gift no worth receivin,
When heavy-dragg'd wi' *pine* an' grievin; pain
But oil'd by thee,
The wheels o' life *gae* down-hill, *scrievin'*, go }
Wi' rattlin glee gliding swiftly }

Thou clears the head o' *doited Lear*; dazed learning
Thou cheers the heart o' drooping Care;
Thou strings the nerves o' Labor *sair*, sore
 At's weary toil;
Thou ev'n brightens dark Despair
 Wi' gloomy smile.

Aft, clad in massy siller weed,†
 Wi' *gentles* thou erects thy head ; people of condition
 Yet, humbly kind in time o' need,
 The poor man's wine ;

* Scones are soft cakes of barley-meal, or wheat flour, or oat-meal mixed with potatoes, baked on the griddle.—J. H.

† Broth made from barley boiled with kale and beef, is the national soup of Scotland.—J. H.

‡ Often, in the form of ale, appearing in silver mugs.—J. H.

His wee drap *parritch*, or his bread, oat meal porridge
 Thou *kitchens* fine.* relish

Thou art the life o' public haunts;
But thee, what were our fairs and *rants*? without frolics
 Ev'n godly meetings o' the *saunts*, saints
 By thee inspir'd,
 When, gaping, they besiege the tents,
 Are doubly fir'd.†

That merry night we get the corn in,‡
 O sweetly, then, thou *reams* the *horn* in! froth }
 Or *reekin* on a New-year mornin horn cup }
 In *cog* or *bicker*, smoking
 An' just a wee drap *sp'ritual* burn in, wooden mug }
 An' *gusty sucker*!§ bowl }
 little drop whisky
 toothful sugar

When Vulcan gies his bellows breath
 An' ploughman gather wi' their *graith*, implements
 O rare! to see thee fizz an' *freath* froth
 I' th' *lugget caup*! eared cup
 Then *Burnewin* comes on like death blacksmith
 At ev'ry *chaup*. stroke

Nae mercy, then, for *airn* or steel; iron
 The brawnie, *bainie*, ploughman *chiel*, large-boned lad
 Brings hard owrehip, wi' sturdy wheel,
 The strong forehammer,
 Till block an' *studdie* ring an' reel, anvil
 Wi' *dinsome* clamor. noisy

When *skirlin weanies* see the light, squalling infants
 Thou maks the gossips clatter bright,

* Brisk small ale or beer is used in Scotland with porridge as well as with bread, in place of milk, when the cow is "yell."—J. H.

† See "The Holy Fair."

‡ The Kirn or Harvest-Home.—J. H.

§ Ale-posset with whisky added and sweetened with sugar.—J. H.

* Robs many a poor dazed, drunken fool.

Wha twists his *gruntle* wi' a *glunch* mouth frown
 O' sour disdain,
Out owre a glass o' whisky-punch over
 Wi' honest men ! with

O whisky ! soul o' plays and pranks !
 Accept a *bardie's* gratefu' thanks ! poet's
 When wanting thee, what tuneless *cranks* grating }
 Are my poor verses ! sounds }
 'Thou comes—they rattle i' their ranks
 At *ither's* a—s ! other's

Thee, Ferintosh !* O sadly lost !
 Scotland lament *frae* coast to coast ! from
 Now colic grips, an' barkin *hoast* cough
 May kill us a';
 For loyal Forbes' charter'd boast
 Is *ta'en awa* ! taken away

Thae curst horse-leeches o' th' Excise, these
 Wha mak the whisky *stells* their prize ! stills
 Haud up thy han'. Deil !† ance, twice,
 thrice ! worthless }
 There, seize the *blinkers* ! † lot }
 An' bake them up in *brunstane* pies brimstone
 For poor d—n'd drinkers.

Fortune ! if thou'll but gie me still whole breeches }
Hale breeks, a *scone*,‡ an' whisky gill, bannock }

* Whisky from a privileged distillery in the barony of Ferintosh, in Cromartyshire, belonging to Forbes of Culloden. The privilege was granted by an act of the Scottish Parliament (1690), for services rendered by Forbes, and expenses incurred, at the Revolution (1688), and was abolished by Parliament in 1785.—J. H.

† Hold up your hand, as if offering a bid for them and wanting them.—J. H.

‡ See stanza fourth.

An' rowth o' rhyme to rave at will,	abundance
<i>Tak a'</i> the rest,	take all
An' deal't about as thy blind skill	
Directs thee best.	

[Gilbert Burns, in his narrative of his brother's early life, thus remarks on the subject of this poem:—"Notwithstanding the praise he has bestowed on 'Scotch Drink'—which seems to have misled his historians—I do not recollect, during these seven years [the Tarbolton period], nor till towards the end of his commencing author—when his growing celebrity occasioned his being often in company—to have ever seen him intoxicated, nor was he at all given to drinking."—*Currie's Ed.*, 1801, vol. i., p. 73.]

Robert Fergusson had composed verses, in the same measure, on the subject of "Caller Water," and Burns, in search of a theme to aid in filling his contemplated volume, took up "Scotch Drink." He has not treated the topic as a temperance lecturer might have done; but the generous reader will be apt to say with Chambers that "the humane passage in verse seventh redeems much that may otherwise be objectionable in the poem."

The following variation occurs in verse twelve, in the first edition:—

Wae worth them for't!	
While healths gae round to him wha, <i>tight</i> ,	"fit"
Gies famous sport.]	

(Mr. Waddell institutes a comparison between this poem of Burns and Horace's odd *Ad Amphoram*, and indicates that the superiority in humor and genial humanity lies with the Scottish bard. There is, he says, "an admixture on Burns' side of deep and gentle charity, that makes his humor like a pungent balm to the consciences of mankind."—J. H.)

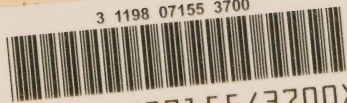
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